

ARCTURUS.

No. IX.

The Career

OF

PUFFER HOPKINS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE MOTLEY BOOK."

CHAPTER V.

THE AUCTION ROOM.

ANXIOUS to become familiar with the people in their assemblies and public gatherings—to learn how crowds are excited and assuaged, and made to do the bidding of cunning men: how that which would be folly and sheer madness with one, may, practised upon many in a confused mass, take the hue of profoundest wisdom and justice: and having at heart withal the suggestions of his strange old friend of Fogfire Hall, Puffer Hopkins now made it a point to haunt meetings and congregations of every sort, anniversaries, wharf crowds and lectures, and to detect how the Leviathan populace is snared in a fair net of silvery words and pleasant speeches.

At the lower extremity of the great thoroughfare of Chatham Street, just below the theatre, lies an oblong deep shop, into which is drawn, between the hours of seven and nine, evening, a portion of the metropolitan life, where it is kept raging and fuming—pent up in a close mass—and struggling with the black-haired demon of the place. The genius of the oblong warehouse is none other than a gloomy looking auctioneer, who hangs over a counter fixed on a raised platform, calling on the individuals before him—who are chiefly clerks, news-boys, journeymen and innocent gentlemen from the country—to sustain him in his disinterested desire to advocate the elegance of binders, the instructive and entertaining qualities of authors, and the gorgeous genius of colorists, engravers and paper-rulers.

This gentleman is ably sustained and seconded, in the performance of these arduous duties, by a sable-haired associate, who makes it his business to stroll cheerfully up and down the enclosed space behind the counter, rubbing his hands from time to time, as in token of internal satisfaction at the success of their joint efforts, and dashing down upon the counter such wares as a sagacious glance at his audience satisfies him are most likely to be competed for.

On some occasions, one or other of the black-haired gentlemen behind the counter condescends to be facetious, and says remarkably funny things for the special benefit and solace of the citizens underneath: this department properly belongs to the auctioneer, but is incidentally filled by the feeder, with such chance morsels of humor as may suggest themselves to him as he rambles to and fro.

Into this oblong region of sale, as one of the resorts where his plans might be furthered, Puffer one evening made his way.

"Gentlemen," cried the black-haired auctioneer with increased animation as Puffer Hopkins entered; discovering perhaps in the peculiar costume and manner of that excellent young gentleman some indications of a melo-dramatic tendency: "Gentlemen, here's the primest article I've offered to-night: this is 'Brimstone Castle,' a native melo-drama, as performed one hundred nights at the Bowery Theatre, Bowery, New York. The hero of this piece, gentlemen, is a regular salamander, and could take out a policy in any company in this city at a low hazard: he's fire-proof. In the first act, he appears sitting on a log, meditating; is sud-

denly surprised and taken by a band of savages of a red-ochre complexion, from whom he escapes by ruthlessly cutting off the right leg of every mother's son of them—rushes over a bridge—rescues a lady with dishevelled hair and a small boy in her hand, climbs up a cataract, waives his cap to the rescued lady, loses his appetite, and is finally re-taken by the savages, and burnt at the stake for an hour—when he walks out of the flame, advances to the foot-lights, and, with a very cheerful smile on his countenance, announces 'Brimstone Castle' for the next twelve nights, with an extra savage and fresh faggots every night. How much gentlemen? Going, going. How much? It's a master-piece, gentlemen—a perfect work of art. How much?"

The melo-drama was bandied about for more than a quarter of an hour among sundry young gentlemen in round-crowned hats, with sleek shining heads of black hair and broad-skirted blue coats, but finally fell to the lot of a bidder with a stout voice, just one of those voices that are irresistible in an auction-room, and a terror to gentlemen that desire cheap purchases.

"I now offer you," cried the auctioneer, "one of the most astonishing and wonderful works of the present day. It's full of thought, gentlemen, expressed in the very happiest words *out* of Todd's Johnson and Noah Webster, as clear as a moonbeam, gentlemen, and profound as the Atlantic. It treats of various subjects, such as"—here the auctioneer turned the pages of the book in his hand rapidly, after the manner of a quarterly Reviewer, with the hope of gleaning a comprehensive knowledge of its contents, but, judging by the face of ineffable despair he assumed after thrusting his nose half a dozen times between the leaves, with little success. "Excuse me," he continued, smiling sardonically on his audience; "It would be presumptuous in me, a plain, unlearned citizen, to undertake to convey to your minds the substance of a volume like this. Gentlemen, I'll read you a passage from the 'Introduction,' which explains itself. 'Ponds have presented turtles in two aspects; either as turtles or as not turtles. In the one, turtle, the living, breathing, air-cased creature, the individual in his pneumatic being, sitting on a rock pond-centred, is mighty, supernal, vastly infinite—more than frogdom at bottom, blind eel or muscle life: not he theirs, or for them, but they

nothing save for him. Outward world—to them, mud-encompassed—otherwise dead, as door-nail : in the other, slidden from pond-centred rock down to the depths of the unsearchable (pond ?) frogdom, blind eel and muscle life—each more than turtle ; he theirs—being thick-headed, obfuscated by lack of light and doltish—and for them, he little or nothing save a black lump, part of the general pond-bottom, pavement, chips, wind, gas, snake-grass and bulrushes.’ ”

It need scarcely be added that the lucid work on which the auctioneer was engaged, was nothing more nor less than a volume of Transcendental lectures. Puffer Hopkins detected the same burly voice bidding for this—and triumphing in its bid—that he had heard twice before.

At this juncture a member of the great fraternity of lay-bishops—in other words, a very worthy cartman in his short frock—came in, and supposing, from the few words that he caught as he entered, that the work in hand was illustrative of some new and improved method of “bobbing for eels,” was rash enough to invest seven shillings in the purchase of a second copy. Paying his money very awkwardly at the counter—out of a blind-pocket in his cart-frock—he carried his purchase to a lamp in another quarter of the auction-room, and proceeded very slowly and painfully to enlighten himself on the favorite pursuit of eel-bobbing. He bobbed, however, in that pond to very little purpose—and becoming confused and horribly enraged at the constant recurrence of the phrases a “oneness,” an “obscure and unreachable infinite,” “divergence towards central orbits,” and “revolutionary inwardnesses,”—intemperately sold it (for six cents and a fraction) to a match-boy, who stood by with a basket ready to catch such purchases as might prove unavailable or disrelishing to the buyers. “There’s an acre of fog-bank there, boy,” said the cartman from between his teeth, “take it away. My horse has a better head for writings, and authorships, and what not, than the stupid journeyman fellow that spoked this wheel together. Just away with it.”

“If there’s a patriot in the room,” continued the salesman, “a single young or middle-aged gentleman that loves his country and the story of her achievements—let him come forward and lay down his one dollar fifty. I offer you, gentlemen, the ‘Battle of Bloody Puddle,’ a narrative poem, in six books. This master-piece of genius has nine

heroes—each one of whom accomplishes more in the way of slaughter, swordsmanship and small-talk, from various elevations, peaks, cliffs and hill-tops, than any nine heroes ever let loose on the world before. The stanza is irregular, to correspond with the thought, which is very wild and super-human. The chief hero—the A. No. 1,—pattern warrior, is discovered by moonlight sharpening his sword on a boulder of granite, in two nimble-foot octosyllabic stanzas—he loses his scabbard and temper in four Spenserian—entering a cave to conceal himself from the bloody British foe—who are tracking him about like dogs, in twenty-five hexameters—but recovers both in an eleven-syllabled song; in which he grows very happy about wine, war and woman—particularly Isobel the fair—until, all at once, he discovers a cloud on the moon; which reminds him to prepare for a few elegiac verses and death. He ultimately hangs himself in a hemlock sapling, and leaves his pocket-book—with a counterfeit bill and some forged letters in it—to his Isobel; bidding her, in a brief touching epistolary farewell, never to part with these relics of his affection—never, never! which it is'nt very likely she ever will: particularly the counterfeits. The rest of the poem corresponds; how much, how much? Cheap—going cheap—as politicians' consciences, a penny a dozen. It's yours, sir, at twenty-five cents. It's perfectly ruinous to sell this work at that price," sighed the auctioneer, wheeling round and stoically receiving from his assistant a bundle of two dozen more of the same.

There was something in the voice of the bidder who had borne off the chief purchases of the evening, that excited the curiosity of Puffer Hopkins; he thought he had heard it before, and, to ascertain the owner, now mounted a bench, and peered over the heads of the audience towards the quarter whence it had issued.

In a remote angle of the auction room, apart from the crowd, in a little domain of his own, stood a square, broad-breasted gentleman, with his arms folded and gazing at the auctioneer with a fixed and intense look, that could not have been readily surpassed by a Spanish inquisitor, or a petty justice reproving a constable. The fury of his demeanor was heightened by the close buttoning of his coat, to the very throat, the inflation of his coat skirts with a thick bundle of newspapers and a large bandanna handkerchief, the strapping of his pantaloons firmly down upon the boot, and still

further, by his being a gentleman of moderate stature, in whom, it is well known, fierceness is natural and quite becoming. It was this gentleman that bid for the melo-drama, the poem of Bloody Puddle, and the volume of Transcendental Lectures; and now that he had attained a full view of his person, Puffer felt quite sure that he knew him. Pushing through the mass of bidders, he reached the little Zahara which this gentleman's frowns and dignity had created for himself.

"Mr. Fishblatt—I think," said Puffer, respectfully contemplating the figure before him.

"The same, sir," responded the broad-breasted gentleman, starting back a pace or two, dropping his brows, and regarding the questioner steadily for a minute or more. "You are one of our speakers I believe," continued Mr. Fishblatt, still maintaining his survey, "one of the oratorical youth of Fog-fire Hall—am I right?"

"You are," answered Puffer Hopkins: "I had the honor of speaking before you at the last general meeting; you were a Vice-President."

"What!" cried Mr. Fishblatt, in an earnest whisper, "you are not the young gentleman that used the simile of the rainbow? On my soul you are; don't blush, my dear sir, and turn every color in a minute, for that convicts you at once. I'm glad to see you: it's quite a treat. Take my hand, Mr. Hopkins."

Hereupon Mr. Fishblatt took possession of Puffer Hopkins' right hand, shook it strenuously, and then turning to the auctioneer on service, said:

"That man's worthy to be a Quarterly Reviewer. He's a Jeffrey, a Babbington Macaulay, sir; an Edward Everett, with the devil in him. He tells books by the smell of the leather. And see how daintily he holds an annual up, as a fishmonger does a bass by the tail, so as to send the circulation to the head, and give the eyes a life-like look. Don't he play on the leaves and illustrations like a musical genius? See, my good sir, how he displays that volume with colored plates; it's like a glimpse into the fall woods. This is the shop for sound criticism; writers that are disdainfully treated in the weeklies and monthlies, need'nt be afraid to come here; if they're hacked and hewed so that their best friend could'nt know them, all they need do is to huddle themselves into a coarse blue-cloth apparel, and throw themselves be-

fore that black-haired gentleman ; and they'll have a blast sounded in their behalf that will bring every two and six pence in the place rattling on the counter."

While the broad-breasted gentleman was engaged elaborating this artful encomium on his friend, the auctioneer had produced a huge bundle of controversial tracts and almanacs, black with wood-cuts, and dashed them upon the counter with great spirit ; at which Mr. Fishblatt started, again grasped Hopkins by the hand, gave him the street and number of his residence, and urged him to call speedily.

"You can't mistake the house ; it's a red front, with tall chimney-pots—grenadier pots we call them—and a slab of brass on the door, with 'Halsey Fishblatt' in large text. Any of the hackmen on the Square can direct you, for they can all read my plate as they stand, nearly two rods off. Come soon !"

Pouring out his passages of description and invitation vehemently, Mr. Fishblatt gave Puffer a strenuous good-night—advanced and threw his card upon the counter, and thrusting his right hand into the breast of his coat, marched out of the auction room with great vigor and self-possession.

Now that the chief bidder, who had held the room in awe by his peremptory and majestic manner of calling the price, had departed, the minor customers immediately swelled into consequence, and a horrible conflict was forthwith engendered betwixt the match-boy—whose imagination always kindled at the slightest suggestion of a goblin ; a small retail clerk, who had sympathies with coffins and family vaults, as he slept every night in an unwholesome and grave-like cabin at the rear of the dry-goods shop ; and a broken-down gentleman—a speculator in cemeteries—who was on the look out for information on sepulchral subjects.

"Here's a rare morsel for you, my lads," said the auctioneer, whose style grew more familiar on the departure of the majestic Fishblatt : "a dainty mouthfull, I can tell you. '*The Vision of the Coffin-maker's Prentice*—a story in manuscript—never published.' It's a copyright, boys : as good as new in first hands. It's said the author starved to death, because the publishers would'nt buy his book ; they could import goblins and bugbears cheaper than they could be grown on the spot." "The biggest bugbears always come from abroad," said the feeder, pausing a moment from his rambles—facing the audience, and laying both hands on the

counter. "Come, bid up—will ye? Don't go to sleep, if you please, in that corner. Others say the author choked himself with a chicken-bone—nobody believes that. Poets and poultry have never been on good terms, that I could learn. Will the band be good enough to strike up!"

"Sixpence—there's a dodge," cried the match-boy.

"I'll go nine," said the retail clerk. "That's a more superlative go, I know."

"Nine and one," cried the match-boy, reddening in the face, and glancing spitefully at the retail bidder.

"No penny bids in this shop," interposed the auctioneer, authoritatively. "Try again, gentleman—yours, twelve and a half—twelve and a half!"

This last was the bid of the cemetery speculator.

"Twelve and a half. Fifteen, fifteen, fifteen—one and nine." The bids ran on; the auctioneer chanced to turn the volume toward Puffer Hopkins, who discovered at the side of one of the pages, a pen-and-ink drawing of a stout gentleman, standing in a coffin, with his right arm outstretched as if on the point of beginning a speech. Not knowing but that this might be some new exercise in oratory, and seeing at once the facilities for the pathetic afforded by a snug-built coffin, Puffer entered the field, and overtopping all competition by a half-dollar bid, paid the purchase money in silver—which it employed him some ten minutes to hunt into a corner of his pocket and secure—and bore it away.

In less than a quarter of an hour, he was at his own room in the Fork; had called in his poor neighbor, the tailor, and by the light of a dim candle, (snuffers not being within the appointments of his establishment), entered upon the perusal of his new-bought story.

The manuscript was bound in a black linen cover, worn threadbare and ragged by much handling; was ornamented with rude drawings of cross-bones and tombstones, with quaint inscriptions on the margin; and the leaves were spotted in various places, and the ink faded, as if many burning tears had fallen on the page.



PK 12

The Pontic's Vision.

New York, Arceturus, August 1, 1841.

CHAPTER VI.

THE VISION OF THE COFFIN-MAKER'S 'PRENTICE.

“What was more natural than that the thoughts of Sam Totton, the coffin-maker's 'prentice, should be running on death's heads and grinning skulls, and damp, dark vaults, deep down in the earth ; with now and then a cheerful feeling of the pleasantness of country church-yards, with tombstones interspersed among sweet-scented apple-trees, and rich green palls of bright meadow-grass spreading over the grave. Now and then, too, he might think of ghosts releasing themselves from the grave, and taking a night's ramble, and whistling down tall chimnies in cities, or glaring in, with great cold eyes, at farm-house windows, and frightening the quiet circle at the fireside with a dread token of death near at hand, or some heavy evil about to burst on the unlucky house. By the hour would the young 'prentice sit in the undertaker's shop, meditating on the sorry chances of life ; the wonderful demand for coffins in the summer months, and the strange world into which many merry stout gentlemen, and joyous ladies, would ere long be transported, screwed close down in the cruel coffins that stood in a grim row before him.

“Some he knew would stretch themselves quietly at length, and fall asleep ; others would fight and wrestle, like very demons, ere they could be brought to bear to be shut down and cabined in forever ; and others again, in whom life was furious, and not to be readily extinguished, would smite and dash their deadly hands against the coffin-lid, and would cry out, in voices stifled in the damp thick clay, to be freed.

“With this turn of mind, the 'prentice was sitting one night in the shop, on an undertaker's stool, and watching the various shadows that came through the door, as the August sun settled in the sky. Now the shadow would flit in at one coffin, filling it only breast-high ; then shifting itself, it would take entire possession of a child's, that stood next ; and so flitting past, from one to the other, it brought into Sam's mind the thought how these coffins would one day be tenanted, and what manner of people it might be that should be laid in the coffins that stood about him—large

and small—and how soon they would all be filled and borne silently away.

“The thought had scarcely formed itself in Sam’s mind, when the shop-bell was rung very gently—a glass door that was between him and the street was opened, and a figure, more wo-begone, wretched and disconsolate than he had ever before beheld, presented himself, and paused for a moment, just long enough for the ’prentice to take note of his appearance. His eyes were wild, and sunken far behind pale, ghastly, hollow cheeks, in which there was no drop of blood; his head was without covering of any sort, except a shock of uncombed, matted hair, and he limped sadly forward on disproportioned, infirm legs, in scanty apparel, and with an apologetic appeal in his looks to the young ’prentice, shambled away into a remote corner of the shop, and planted himself as nearly upright and with as great show of decorum as he could, in a cheap pine coffin that stood by itself.

“Sam felt strongly inclined to enter into conversation with the Poor Figure, and to learn by what chances it had been brought into that lean and melancholy beggary. Ere he could do this, the door was pushed forcibly open, and a portly personage entered, and stalking across the shop with great dignity and majesty of bearing, proceeded to an inspection of the coffins; going close up to them, examining nicely the grain of the wood—yea, even smelling of it, and turning away with an air of vast disdain whenever it proved to be cedar or baywood—the quality of the muslin and the action of the hinges. After turning up a majestic nose, discolored slightly by the use of wine or table-beer, at two-thirds of the undertaker’s assortment, the portly gentleman at length pitched upon a magnificent tabernacle of mahogany, with fine rolling hinges, that could’nt jar on his delicate ear when he should come to be fastened in, and an enormous silver-plate, with a chased border of cheerful flowers, that took away the very appearance of death. Having concluded to occupy this tenement, the portly gentleman proceeded to take possession, and with great difficulty crowded himself into the coffin; forgetting, however, to put off his hat, which remained fixed on his head in a very sturdy and consequential position; and there he stood, bolt-upright, staring at the young ’prentice, as if it was his determination to chill him into an icicle. Sam was, however, not so ea-

sily over-awed, but on the contrary felt greatly inclined to burst into a good hearty laugh at the comic figure the nice portly gentleman made in his dainty brass-hinged mahogany coffin.

"As he turned away his eyes, they encountered a spectacle which came nigh changing their merry humor to tears—for a sweet lady, all in white, floated gently past him; of a fair, meek demeanor, and bearing in either hand two little children, a boy and girl, whose faces ever turned toward the lady's with an expression of intense and tender regard. Clinging to her with a firm grasp, they glided by, and tried at first to find rest in one coffin together, which proving ineffectual, they chose coffins neighboring to each other, and quietly assuming their places, they stood calm and patient, as if death had fallen kindly upon them; the two children turning reverently toward their dear mother, and hanging on her pale sweet look with passionate constancy.

"Directly in the steps of these visitors, there entered a personage, who, judging from the dotted apparel in which he presented himself, might have been the ghost of some black-spotted card or other, come to take a hand with Sam's master, who was greatly addicted to the sport and entertainment of whist-playing. However this might be, the new-comer entered with a couple of somersets, turned about when he had reached the centre of the shop, took off his piebald cap, and made a leg to Sam, and then scrambled into a coffin directly opposite that of the portly gentleman.

"For a long time these two personages stood regarding each other; the one grinning and hitching up his leg, as if he felt the irksomeness of confinement; and the other, with a solemn look of consequence and self-importance, determined the very grave itself should not get the better of him.

"'This is pleasant!' said the portly gentleman, at length, with a slight tone of irony and condescension, to his neighbor, the clown.

"'Very, but not so airy as the ring!' answered the merry-andrew.

"'Nor as snug as a corporation pantry, with a cut of cold tongue between two debates,' returned the portly gentleman. 'But then it has its advantages. No taxes, mind that, (those

tax-gatherers used to be the torment of my life), no ground-rents, poor-rates ; no beggar's ding-ding at the front-door bell.'

" 'But consider,' responded the clown, 'tho' we lodge in a cellar, as it were, a good under-ground, six steps down, where are the oysters and brandy ? Did that occur to you ?'

" 'I confess it did not,' said the portly gentleman, slightly staggered, 'but I was thinking now what a choice storage this would be for half a gross of tiptop champagne, with the delicate sweat standing on the outside of the bottles.'

" 'There's no room for a somerset here, either,' said the clown.

" 'Nor to deliver a speech in,' answered the portly gentleman. "See, I could'nt stretch out my right arm half its length, to make even my first gesture ; rather a cramped, close place, after all.'

" 'Vanities ! vanities !' cried the Poor Figure, from his distant coffin, unable to suppress his feelings any longer. 'Cramped and close is it ! It's a paradise compared to the dark, damp dungeons on the earth, where the living body is pent up in dreary walls, and the cheerful light of day comes in by stealth through grim bars. When the world moves past the poor prisoner's window without a look of recognition ; when no man's hand takes his in a congenial grasp—is that life, d'ye say ? He is dead—I tell you, dead !' cried the Poor Figure, in a voice of piercing agony, 'as if the marble slab was laid upon his breast, and the grave-diggers piled mountains upon his corse !'

" 'Many's the jolly time,' resumed the portly gentleman, without much heed to the Poor Figure's declamation, 'we've had at city suppers. How tenderly the turkey's breast—bought by the commonalty, purchased by the sweat of the hard-worked million—yielded to the shining knife. How sweetly the popular port-wine, and the public porter, glided down the throat. Choice times were those, my good sir, when the city paid the hackman's fare for dainty rides to the suburbs, and when we made the poor devil paupers stand about us licking their thin chaps, while we rolled the rich morsels under our tongues. But now,' he added in a rather melancholy tone, 'I am little better than one of the heathen. I smell nothing but the musty earth ; my gay apparel is falling piecemeal into doleful tatters, and I can get nothing to chew upon but an occasional mouthful of black

mould, that sadly impedes digestion, if one had any digestion, in such a place as this worth speaking of.

“‘Think but of one thing, sir,’ said the clown, with an uneasy movement in his coffin, ‘and you cannot fail to be content. Where are the duns in this new empire of ours? We are as inaccessible to the vile creatures as the crown of an ice-berg. Why, sir, there was a poor wretch of a collector that haunted me for a vile debt of twenty-two and sixpence, until I was sorely tempted to take his very life; and put myself upon contrivances how I could take it with most pain and torture to his body and soul. I thought of all sorts of man-traps, and pit-falls in blind-alleys, and leaden-headed bludgeons; and at length—heaven save the mark!—I pitched upon the scheme of carrying him off in a balloon, and about two miles up, letting him slip with a cord about his neck, and hang dangling by the neck until dead, ten thousand feet high. He was got safely into the balloon by a dexterous accomplice; was carried up—and, now that my mind was at ease as to the result, I went home to take a quiet cup of tea, and to settle up my books, meaning to run my pen through the twenty-two and six as a settled account, when—the Lord save us—who should knock gently at my door, and march in with his old impudent smile, than my old enemy the collector, with his customary phrases—hoping he didn’t intrude—and, if it wasn’t too much trouble, he would like to have the small amount of his bill, which, as I knew, had been standing some time. The rope had broken, sir, just as they passed over my house, the vile little rascal had pitched upon the roof, and making the best of circumstances, had walked down my scuttle, and availing himself of the opportunity, had looked in with his cursed little bill. We’re free from the scamp now.—I’m not sure, isn’t that he in the pine coffin?’

“Sure enough, there stood the Poor Figure, leaning toward them, and listening in an attitude of intense regard, to every word that had fallen from the lips of the clown.

“‘I am the man!’ he cried with great emphasis, when the clown had ended. ‘None other but I. On the little paltry debt of twenty-two and sixpence, hung my old father’s life, who lay rotting in the cold jail: waiting for deliverance, which I had promised him many times—with as false a tongue as man could. I said I would come to-morrow at such an hour, and the next to-morrow at such an hour—

naming, in my desire to bring him definite hope, the very minute and second: and I did not come. Was not that a lie? And did you not stand behind me, another liar? How many lying, false tongues wagged with yours and mine, in that little business of the twenty-two shillings and sixpence, God only knows! I forgive you the debt: the old man's bones are at the bottom of the prison well where he perished. They should plead for truth from its gloomy womb, and have a voice to shake prison walls and fetters from manly limbs. God grant they may.'

"The Poor Figure had scarcely ended when the door was slowly opened, and disclosed a meek little man clad in a neat suit of plain black, with two snow-white bands falling under his chin. His gait and aspect denoted many solemn thoughts, and with a slow pace, and a seeming consciousness of the gloomy realm in which he was treading, he advanced to an obscure corner of the place, and folding his arms calmly upon his breast, stood silently in his coffin—his head only inclined a little to one side, as if he expected momentarily to catch the sound of the last great trump, and to welcome the summons.

"Sam heard a noise in the hall, as of some person shuffling about in heavy boots in search of the door, and after the lapse of a few minutes a large man in a white coat with a dirty cape, a ponderous leather hat, and a club in his hand, swaggered boldly in, and after looking about him for a while as if on the watch for a ghost or apparition, walked quietly off, and taking his station in a comfortable cedar coffin in the middle of the apartment—obviously mistaking it for a watch-box—fell gently asleep. From all that he saw, Sam imagined that this was a city watchman; and the presumption is, that he was not far wrong.

"After a salubrious slumber of some ten minutes or more, this gentleman waked up, and thrusting his head out of his coffin, stretched his neck, and gazed up and down the apartment, and then toward the ceiling.

"'How the devil's this?' he at length exclaimed, 'the lamps are out early to-night: and the alderman must have put the moon in his pocket, I guess. That's the way they serve us poor charleys. We wouldn't catch a rogue more than once an age if we didn't take them into porter-houses and get 'em drunk, and study their physiognomies, and so set them a stealing half fuddled!'

“‘What’s that you say, my man?’ cried the voice of the portly gentleman. ‘What fault have you to find with the corporation, I’d like to know? Do you pretend to impeach their astronomy, Sir; and to say, Sir, that the moon doesn’t rise when she is set down for in the almanac? I’d have you know, Sir, the moon’s bespoke three months ahead; and that the oil-dealers know when they put a short allowance in the lamps! I’ll have you broke, if you haven’t a care how you speak of an aldermon. A word to the wise in your ear, Sir.’

“The watchman was making up his mouth for a reply, and it is impossible to say what choice specimens of rhetoric might not have been furnished between them, but at this moment the shop-bell was rung with great fury: Sam started up with wonderful alacrity—distinguishing the ring at once from all other possible rings—and receiving, as he advanced to the front of the warehouse a thumping blow on the side of the head, was asked what he meant by leaving the shop open at that time of night, and coffins out at the door to be rotted by the night dew and chalked up by young vagabonds in the street?

“This was of course Sam’s master: Sam’s visitors mistook it, however, for a summons of a very different kind; the watchman, supposing it to be an alarm of fire, rattled his club against the coffin-side and sprang for the door: the portly gentleman thought it a melodious supper-bell, and, disengaging himself, exhibited equal activity: the Poor Figure followed, hobbling along like a waiter in a hurry: the clown, for the call-boy’s notice, and somerseted through the door: the sweet lady in white, for the last peal of the Sunday summons, and glided away with her children at her side: and the little parson, smoothing down his bands and calming his thoughts to the purpose of the hour, taking it for the Wednesday-evening lecture call:—and so the company dispersed.

“Sam busying himself in obeying the undertaker’s orders, soon closed the warehouse; and as he moved past the empty coffins, to his bed at the end of the shop, and thought how they had been lately filled, it occurred to him how inopportunately men might be laid in their graves: debtors lying nearest neighbors to catchpoles and deputies, whose approach was the curse of their life: the clown and the alderman, parsons and profligates, in a tender vicinage: tapsters and favorers of the pure stream, perchance murderers and

their victims, and breakers of troth and violators of faith pledged to woman, in a proximity so close, that the skeleton arm outstretched might reach into the grave where the broken heart lay, and take its cold and ineffectual hand back into that which had done it such deadly wrong. On Judgment Day, when the trump sounds among burials like these, if aught of fiery or human passion remain, what awful scenes will bear witness to the fancy of the young 'prentice-boy: when forms shall start up and have life again but to glare on other wakened forms—to loathe, curse, scorn and abhor that on which they gaze. Grave-yards would then know a strife and passionate conflict, that battle fields could not match, with all their sanguinary stains, and cries of horror, vengeance or despair.”

STEPHENS' CENTRAL AMERICA.*

WE desire to occupy neither the position of outriders, keeping in advance of the public judgment, making boisterous announcements of the approach of eminent or distinguished personages in the fraternity of authorship; nor on the other hand that of guard at the rear of the progress, catching, as it were, a post-obit view of whatever is noteworthy or memorable. Seated, comfortably as we may be, in our monthly voiture, we are satisfied in taking a leisurely and discriminating survey of such objects as meet us as we pass along—being neither confused by the dust and racket that disturb the van, nor on the other hand tardy enough to lose, like the quarterly rear-guard, all advantage of the freshness and novelty of the pageant. If we do not express our surprise and astonishment at the merits of a new work, quite equal to the spontaneous outbreaks of our brethren of the daily press, we imagine our critical opinions will in the long run prove quite as satisfactory to our readers at least; if not always to publisher and writer.

* *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan.* By John L. Stephens. Illustrated by numerous engravings. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1841. 2 vols., pp. 424, 474.

Perhaps this is to be charged to a singularity of constitutional temperament, which fails to be impressed with or to recognize every new work in octavo as an accession to the literature of the country or an ornament to the age.

We are not a jot better satisfied that the work before us, for instance, is an addition to our native literature, from the circumstance of its presenting itself in two massive volumes with numerous engravings: if it had come in the humblest eighteen-mo habiliments, it would have met with an equal share of our critical regards. It is true, in the case of Mr. Stephens' book, we owe a certain debt of gratitude to the paper-maker, the printer, the engravers and publishers, and to them we beg leave most respectfully to remove our hat and say, "Gentlemen, you have our thanks!" The author's account is a separate one; and to the fair adjustment of that we now proceed to give our attention.

It appears to be conceded on all hands that Mr. Stephens has furnished us two volumes of an entertaining and agreeable character; and that he has done his best to place the antiquities of Central America before us, as far freed from all scholastic or learned incumbrances as was possible. Whether in attempting this task he has not erred on the other side, and deprived his work too greatly of all the supports that such a subject should derive from careful research and copious inquiry, admits of question.

It does not seem to us that Mr. Stephens at any time contemplated the preparation of an elaborate work on South American antiquities. He was carried, formerly and in his first experiment at travel, into a country which happened to be remarkable for its remains of the past; and discovering there many things which struck his fancy, he gave to the public, on his return, a lively and readable account of what he had seen. We do not suppose there was any original bias in Mr. S.'s mind toward antiquities. If he had met any eccentric or peculiar race of men or tribe of animals, he would have described them with the same gusto. If therefore he fails in the qualities and acquirements desirable in the antiquary, the public need not be greatly surprised.

What, then, has Mr. Stephens done as an antiquarian? So little, and in such a way, that for all aid to the scholar, the historian, or even the man of general information, it had better have been left undone. We are indebted, indeed, to his partner in the expedition, Mr. Catherwood, for accurate and

well executed drawings of different objects hitherto unknown, at Copan, at Palenque and Uxmal. Whatever has been done in this way appears to have been well done. There is much that is entirely new; many improved drawings of sculptures hitherto imperfectly represented, though the scale of the present work is humble compared with the costly publication of Waldeck. With the representation of what he saw in an able, artist-like manner, Mr. Catherwood leaves his portion of the subject. Mr. Stephens, while he expressly disclaims any attempt to elucidate the vexed question of the origin of these cities, continually draws inferences by the way, and at the close devotes one chapter to disprove any remoter antiquity than that of the race found in Mexico at the time of the Spaniards. Without a theory, without historical landmarks, without the zeal or means of learned research, Mr. Stephens is yet ambitious of the fame of an antiquarian. He would wisely connect his name with that of the vast structures he visited, knowing that as those sublime monuments have outlived uncounted generations, they will survive the present race, in transient glimpses of whom the remainder of his book is occupied. The story of South American warfare, of international squabbles and uncivilized revolutions, is written in water. Already the details given by the traveler of the parties Morazan and Cabrera are handed over to oblivion; there have been a hundred struggles like them, there will be a hundred more; their plots and counterplots are connected with no advancement of the race; they are of no value to the philosopher or the statesman. But when the present and succeeding generations have passed, the monuments of a lost civilization will remain, fresh in the attention of the learned, as a curious problem on the page of history, to be solved by intelligence and research—will still rise to provoke the imagination of the poet, and point with the pathos of fallen greatness the reflections of the moralist. To be connected, incidentally, with the history of such monuments, is no mean ambition; but it is a result not to be attained at this day without the exercise of several remarkable qualities—and of these the most indispensable are, learning, taste and ingenuity. The key to unlock their mystery must be forged in the school of patient, laborious study. The knowledge of American antiquities requires acquaintance with something more than can be *seen* at the present day—it requires skilful analysis and scientific hypothesis to connect

the broken piers and span once more the waste of centuries with the perfect outline of regular, authentic history. It needs a mature consideration of the labors of the learned. Such materials as were within his reach Mr. Stephens rejected; but he has attempted to build a structure, without the materials, of such disjointed fragments as lay before his eyes. Need it be wondered at that at the first breath of inquiry his theory totters to its fall?

After asserting that he will not enter into the primary question, whence came the first settlers of the country; without a knowledge of which, it is evident he can never understand the history of the buildings he saw; he yet does undertake to determine the very point he has disavowed. Upon page 455, Vol. II, he says, "We are not warranted in going back to any ancient nation of the old world for the builders of these cities." On page 348, Vol. II, he says, speaking of a building at Palenque, "Altogether like the rest of the architecture and ornaments, it was perfectly unique, different from the works of any other people with which we were familiar." At page 442, Vol. II, he says, "We have a conclusion far more interesting and wonderful than that of connecting the builders of these cities with the Egyptians or any other people. It is the spectacle of a people skilled in architecture, sculpture and drawing, and beyond doubt other more perishable arts, and possessing the cultivation and refinement attendant upon these, *not derived from the old world*, but originating and growing up here, without models or masters, having a distinct, separate, independent existence; like the plants and fruits of the soil, indigenous." Our author, it will be remembered, denies the antiquity of these works. Now, if Mr. Stephens means that the arts, refinements, &c., were not derived from the old world; then as no vestige of their history remains, they must be of *very great antiquity*. Writing would have been among those arts of refinement; we know, indeed, from the hieroglyphics of Palenque, that it *was*—and old indeed must have been the people that could write, of whom all written memorials are now completely obliterated. Further, if Mr. Stephens, in this sentence of doubtful import, means that the *people* were not derived from the old world, he then makes two origins for the human family, and contradicts the Mosaic history.

If Mr. Stephens were in earnest in his denial of a remote antiquity to the builders of the ruins, he has certainly very

unwisely encumbered his book with a mass of contradictory arguments and inferences. He has, undeniably, confuted himself. Vol. II, page 356, he says of Palenque, "there was no necessity for assigning to the ruined city an immense extent, or an antiquity coeval with that of the Egyptians, or any other ancient and known people. What we had before our eyes was grand, curious, and remarkable enough. Here were the remains of a cultivated, polished and peculiar people, who had passed through all the stages incident to the rise and fall of nations; reached their golden age, and perished, *entirely unknown*. The links which connected them with the human family were severed and lost, and these were the *only* memorials of their footsteps upon earth." Now take Palmyra of the desert for instance. It is very old, but yet we know what it was, and when it flourished. Will Mr. Stephens admit Palenque to be older? He should do so in consistency, for it takes centuries for any people to grow up into "cultivated, polished and peculiar," to pass "through *all* the stages incident to the rise and fall of nations," to reach "their golden age," and then to have "perished" so long ago, that now they are "entirely unknown."

Listen to our author again—"I am inclined to think, that there are not sufficient grounds for the belief in the great antiquity that has been ascribed to these ruins; that they are not the works of people who have passed away, and whose history has become unknown; but that they were constructed by the races who occupied the country at the time of the invasion by the Spaniards, or of some not very distant progenitors." (page 442, Vol. II). Hear him once more, and mark his consistency. "Cortez must have passed within twenty or thirty miles of the place now called Palenque. If it had been a living city, its fame must have reached his ears, and he would probably have turned aside from his road to subdue and plunder it. It seems, therefore, but reasonable to suppose, that it was *at that time* desolate and in ruins, and even the *memory of it lost*." (p. 357, Vol. II).

Further still, let us hear from our author whether these natives, whose not "very remote progenitors" built these cities, (and who, by the way, had hieroglyphical writing), possessed any traditionary, or other knowledge, about their fathers' work. They know nothing about their origin any more than we do. (page 423, Vol. II). "The Indians regard these ruins with superstitious reverence. They will not go near them at night,

and they have the old story that immense treasure is hidden among them." To all inquiries about their history, their answer is "*quien sabe*"—who knows?

Still further, let us see whether Mr. S. thinks the present race (undeniably descendants of those whom Cortez subdued) are really sprung from the builders of Palenque?

At Palenque are certain basso relievo representations of the human figure, all marked by a striking peculiarity of the facial angle. (Vol. II, page 311). "The upper part of the head seems to have been compressed and lengthened." "The head represents a different species from any now existing in that region of country; and supposing the statues to be images of living personages, or the creations of artists according to their ideas of perfect figures, they indicate *a race of people now lost and unknown.*"

(Page 358, Vol. II). "Among the Indians who came out to escort us to the village, was one whom we had not seen before, and whose face bore a striking resemblance to those delineated on the walls of the building. In general, the faces of the Indians were of an entirely different character, but he might have been taken for a lineal descendant of the perished race. The resemblance was, perhaps, purely accidental," &c.

Now, is it not strange that our author should talk of "some not very remote progenitors" of the present Indians, as being the builders of these cities, when he himself tells us, 1st. That the builders could *write*. 2d. That the present race cannot, and cannot read what their fathers wrote, (no people ever lost writing). 3d. That the builders had a marked physiognomy. 4th. That their descendants have not. 5th. That their descendants have not even traditional knowledge of their progenitors and their doings.

Mr. S. seems sometimes to think that these cities are ancient, and sometimes modern. If he understood himself thoroughly, he would unquestionably refer them to different dates, for no country ever had all its cities built at the same period—he would refer them, too, to builders of very different regions, and springing from different portions of the one human family. Palenque is, undoubtedly, older than Uxmal, so too is Copan. It may also be conceded, that the Mexicans could build large stone houses before Cortez came; all this is perfectly consistent with the fact, that a race long before the Mexicans, (whose coming we know the

history of from their own pictorial writings), could also build stone houses. Marvellous is it, that if Palenque, for instance, was built by the Aztecs, (the ancestors of the Mexicans), its very existence and origin should have been unknown to their descendants in a few hundred years; and that no Mexican can now decipher the writings at Palenque; and that the Mexicans should have had *pictorial* writings, while their immediate ancestors had *hieroglyphical* solely.

As to hieroglyphical writing among the Mexicans, it existed, as some suppose, but certainly pictorial was far more common. It may be doubted whether any Mexican MSS., in hieroglyphics, are *originals*; some think them but copies of other MSS., or sculpture found by the Mexicans, and not understood, and certainly not interpreted by them to this day. Admit them to be original if you please—a specimen (badly executed) may be seen on page 454, Vol. II, in juxtaposition with one from Palenque—Mr. Stephens thinks they are alike: about as much alike as Hamlet's cloud and the camel.

The great interest of these monuments is to us identified with their antiquity. For the sake of poetry we would willingly be at some pains to erect a firm basis of historical support, whence the imagination might wing its flight securely over the past and distant. Until we have a greater array of learning, or a more consistent opponent, we shall still cling to our belief in the remote antiquity of these ruins. Like those on our own soil, they return no answer to the inquirer. They have led us away to a new field of investigation in the south; but we confess that we still feel a deeper interest in the antiquities of our North American portion of the continent. In antiquities, as abstractions, as remains or collections of masonry and rude images, we have no interest whatever. It is as relics of our kindred of the human family, which they have left behind them to remind us of their modes of life, their forms of worship, and the circumstances incident to them as men of the same kith and kin with ourselves, that we are persuaded to regard them at all. The nearer these are brought home to us, the more deeply do we feel their worth. The western mounds are a part of our territory, a portion of our native land; in a few years they will be embraced within the walls of our dwellings, the enclosures of our gardens, and will silently admonish the citizens of the great empire of

the west, in their public assemblies and exercises of religion, that they are but renewing *there* scenes enacted long ago. Around them it is our duty to gather the most solemn interests; to make them instructive, and profitable to our own generation, and our own people.

Here we part company with Mr. Stephens, an easy gossiping narrator, a good companion in his books, which are of a class to be popular, without learning or any distinct literary claims. His writings are popular, with many faults of style and manner. The defects are often so lively as to be mistaken for merits. The free colloquialisms of expression pass for humor; the undisguised egotism, for frankness.

We regret that it has been thought proper in any quarter to claim for these volumes the character of an addition to the stock of American literature. They are not such, and cannot be so accounted when measured by any fair standard of examination. We do ourselves great wrong, by greeting, with such extraordinary clamor, any new work of more than ordinary pretence in its binding, typography, or dimensions. When any genuine product shall appear, we trust we shall not be found among the last to greet it; to give it a careful and respectful consideration, and a welcome equal to its merits. Until such time arrive—which would that it were now hastening upon us—we shall hold ourselves in readiness to measure the publications of the day by standards of truth, which will not make our approval of truly great works a mockery and an echo of what unworthy or insufficient claimants had already engrossed.

STERLING'S POEMS.*

IF we may judge of the poetical cultivation of the last few years by the best occasional verses that appear in the literary journals, and higher periodicals, the standard of the

* Poems. By John Sterling.

Feeling, Thought and Fancy be
Gentle sister Graces three;
If these prove averse to me,
They will punish—pardon Ye!

London: Moxon. 1839. 18mo. pp. 245.

day in poetry is high and honorable. If we look for the signs of poetry to great poets, we may ask for them in vain. There is now no Byron, or Scott, in his different way, or Wordsworth, (who does not belong to the present generation), or Coleridge, or Shelley, or Keats. There is no one name around which centres the popular admiration; no idol of the people to gather the suffrages of all, and in the name of fashion send the winged leaves of the press into the saloon of the wealthy, even the counting-room of the merchant, and unite the sympathy of the poor artizan in the crowd. Such tributes were rendered to Scott and Byron, and like all generous gifts, the popularity and favor given to the authors personally, flowed back upon the giver. An enthusiasm for literature, a belief in the thoughts of men of genius, were silently engrafted on the public mind. After these authors had written, the people were not the same they were before. The enthusiasm for intellect they had shared in, changed the whole character. It is not too much to say, looking back upon the period, that men afterwards were less selfish, had wider sympathies; that they began to pursue with greater interest purity and elevation of thought.

Much of the practical good that has been effected within the present century, may directly be traced to the popularity of a few great writers. Their influence was on the side of intellect and intelligence; their sayings became watchwords of refinement along the world; the test of conversation. Not to have read Sir Walter Scott, was to be out of the pale of society. After making all allowances for fashion and imitation, it must be admitted a new idea had been interwoven with the thoughts of the age: an idea opposed to sensualism and dull commonplace living—the idea of literary merit—the introduction upon the stage of a new hero for the popular gaze, the “hero as man of letters.”

But the race of heroes is very precarious. The cries of the people cannot even raise a succession of tragedians at the theatre, only to *imitate* (with proper physical accomplishments) the intellectual processes of the great dramatist; much less can the wants of the time produce the original poet. In the dearth of great authors, we begin already to look back with wonder upon the writers of the last twenty-five years; the oldest of us with pride that they lived in that era, the younger with satisfaction that they are born to enjoy its maturest fruits.

Deficient as the present moment is in great poets, (for there are none now writing of sufficient power to *compel* booksellers to print and republish their works), it is superior in the love of poets and poetical cultivation, to the period preceding the one we have mentioned. We have not relapsed into heartlessness and frivolity. Nay, has not the battle been fought against those odious powers of the eighteenth century, and are we not now gathering, with greater or less faithfulness, the fruits of victory? If we look at the list of publications in the *Edinburgh Review*, at the beginning of its career, and at its last bulletin of poetry, we will be struck with the change. It is a task to read the names of the verses there put forth; now, at this barren period, we have minor names, it is true, but they will live with the *Donnes*, the *Carews* and *Marvells* of the classic poetry, by their simplicity and sincerity. If there are few poems, there are, at least, glorious lines and verses in *Elliott*, *Keeble*, *Miss Barrett*, *Mrs. Norton*, *Tennyson* and *Sterling*: the last, a name little familiar to American ears, but well known as "*Archæus*," in recent numbers of *Blackwood's Magazine*.

If our republishers had a portion of that faith in which booksellers are commonly deficient, and had the ambition to lead the public taste by some nicety in their choice of publication, and were not content so often to give a good book grudgingly to the public at the last moment, we would have but little to say of these last mentioned names. If their works were accessible to the reader, we should be in no haste to review them, for we have no fault to find, nor do they need any prosaical gloss to set forth their poetical merits.

But if publishers are silent, a magazine, too, is a book, and is not *Arcturus* specially pledged, in a prospectus circulated from *Nantucket* to *St. Louis*, to "promote the cause of good literature?" Beside, there is a tacit understanding between a journal and the public, that it is to be a faithful record of all sound books; and the author, too, has his fair demands for justice, at least, and encouragement, if need be, from the press. Alas! he is often met with no sympathy, and sad misconstruction. He asks for bread, and receives a stone.

In calling *Archæus* a poet, we would be mindful of the higher claims of the old poets his fanciful designation calls to mind. Of the unconscious process of the highest poetry,

he has little. He writes, it may be premised, more as the teacher than the bard. He pours forth no unpremeditated lay. His imagination calls up no "fiery, delectable shapes." He is a poet, not of passion, but of feeling, reason and philosophy, and in his own peculiar school, he is not a leader, but a follower of the modern master, Wordsworth. The volume of *Archæus* is the result of philosophic meditation; recalling from history noble examples of ancient worth, and reproducing bygone poetical elements of character, as in the sketches of Lady Jane Grey, Joan of Arc, Dædalus and others; gathering scattered reflections in so-called Songs, (to be meditated, not sung); or trusting boldly to his wishes in the expression of sentiment, as in the Tale of the Sexton's Daughter. In all, we discover a secondary process of analysis, the labor of the artist, it is true, but far below the freedom of Chaucer and the old bards in their transcripts from nature and life.

There is one merit that should not be withheld from Mr. Sterling; that of the accomplished poetical workman. He has an ear for melody, and submits his lines to the severest refining process. They are often as solidly compacted and wrought to the fineness and firmness of the forge of Vulcan, as he is described in Homer, tempering some celestial work for the immortals.

These are lines on Shakspeare, formed of a sinew and muscle to live.

How little fades from earth when sink to rest
The hours and cares that moved a great man's breast!
Though naught of all we saw the grave may spare,
His life pervades the world's impregnate air;
Though Shakspeare's dust beneath our footsteps lies,
His spirit breathes amid his native skies;
With meaning now from him forever glows
Each air that England feels, and star it knows;
His whispered words, from many a mother's voice,
Can make her sleeping child in dreams rejoice,
And gleams from spheres he first conjoined to earth,
Are blent with rays of each new morning's birth.
Amid the sights and tales of common things,
Leaf, flower, and bird, and wars, and deaths of kings,
Of shore, and sea, and nature's daily round
Of life that tills and tombs that load the ground,
His visions mingle, swell, command, pace by,
And haunt with living presence heart and eye;
And tones from him by other bosoms caught,

Awaken flush and stir of mounting thought,
 And the long sigh, and deep impassioned thrill,
 Rouse custom's trance, and spur the faltering will.
Above the goodly land, more his than ours,
He sits supreme, enthroned in skyey towers,
And sees the heroic brood of his creation,
Teach larger life to his ennobled nation.
 O! shaping brain, O! flashing fancy's hues!
 O! boundless heart kept fresh by pity's dew!
 O! wit humane and blythe! O! sense sublime
 For each dim oracle of mantled Time!
 Transcendent Form of Man! in whom we read
 Mankind's whole tale of Impulse, Thought, and Deed;
 Amid the expanse of years, beholding thee,
 We know how vast our world of life may be;
 Wherein, perchance, with aims as pure as thine,
 Small tasks and strengths may be no less divine.

The tale of the Sexton's Daughter occupies the largest portion of the volume. It is a smooth, artless ballad, as the simplicity of the tale requires. One stanza flows in upon another, like the succeeding current of a noiseless river, and like that, too, the disaster of the story is gloomy and inevitable. It is a narrative of affection and disease; the daughter is marked for death, and her lover, a plain village teacher, dies before her. Out of the simplest natural feelings, the story is woven into a brief drama of intense interest. The reader may weep over its pathos. We select from it two brief passages, one a picture of the maid and her lover: worthy the painter's smoothest pencil.

Retired and staid was Henry's look,
 And shrank from men's tumultuous ways;
 And on the earth, as on a book,
 He oft would bend his gaze.

But then at sight of bird or flower,
 Or beam that set the clouds in flame,
 Or aught that told of joy or power,
 Upon the man his genius came.

Most flashed his light when near him shone
 That face of youth, those eyes of blue,
 Whose looks re-echoing every tone,
 Paid heartfelt words with smiles as true.

His Jane was fair to any eye;
 How more than earthly fair to him!

Her very beauty made you sigh
To think that it should e'er be dim.

So childlike young, so gravely sweet,
In maidenhood so meekly proud,
With faith sincere and fancies fleet
Still murmuring soft, ne'er clashing loud.

It was, in truth, a simple soul
That filled with day her great blue eyes,
That made her all one gracious whole,
Needing no charm of gaudy lies.

She had no art, and little skill
In aught save Right, and maiden Feeling ;
On Henry's wisdom leant her will,
No ignorance from him concealing.

And so she freshened all his life,
As does a sparkling mountain rill,
That plays with scarce a show of strife
Around its green aspiring hill.

The other lines are the last breathings of wisdom of the student, as he sinks into the grave. They give evidence, too, of the Christian spirit of our author, the source of his sound spiritual philosophy. Is not a Christian the highest spiritual character of a man, and does it not embrace all that genuine poets can sing? These, verily, are words of good cheer. He whispered,

That Reverence is the bond for man,
With all of Best his eyes discern ;
Love teaches more than Doctrine can,
And no pure Hope will vainly yearn.

That Conscience holds supernal power
To rend or heal the human breast ;
And that in guilt's most dismal hour
God still may turn its war to rest.

Through all on earth that lives and dies,
Still shines that sole Eternal Star,
And while to its great beams I rise,
They seem to make me all they are.

But all from depths of mystery grows,
Which hide from us the root of things ;
And good beyond what Science knows,
To man his faith's high Reason brings.

To thee, to all, my sinking voice,
Beloved ! would fain once more proclaim,
In Christ alone may those rejoice,
Deceived by every other name.

In all but Him our sins have been,
And wanderings dark of doubtful mind ;
In Him alone on earth is seen
God's perfect Will for all mankind.

Blessings be upon those who thus bear their evidence of the Everliving Truth ; the men of simple heart and no vain pretence, who write for us in verse the story of our immortal nature. Wherever thus a true word is spoken, let the speaker be honored. We profess no party feeling in poetry ; we would not reduce all contemporary poetry to one form, though it must be judged by one standard. If we look with patience, there will be seen something genuine in every school that has yet had worshippers ; something honest in the enthusiasm of every age ; and for every sect of poetry there will now be found as many admirers. There are men of all ages mixed up in this multifarious present. The spirit of the age is the spirit not of one man, but of all—of all the past. If some of our modern poets have turned moralists, and in plainness of speech abandoned the old somewhat faded, titled equipage of verse, it is necessary that poetry sometimes should sustain the cause of morality with plainness and dignity. Poetry is not rhyme or verse, but lofty passion. The divine Herbert, looking to the reality of the thing, sang long before the lake school was ridiculed,

Is it not verse, except enchanted groves
And sudden arbors shadow coarse-spun lines ?
Must purling streams refresh a lover's loves ?
Must all be veil'd, while he that reads, divines,—
Catching the sense at two removes ?

The Poet, whether ornament predominate or not in his style, is first of all the Teacher, the first of teachers ; withdrawing men from the pursuit of the material, the low and frivolous, to the admiration and enjoyment of the good and permanent. He recalls the errant mind to the love of goodness, to a sympathy with the beautiful. All have in them the germ of poetry, all men are in some things poets. To unfold this to perfect harmony of life, is it not rather than the art to please, the noblest aim of the poet ? D.

O. A. BROWNSON.

THE character of a Reformer, in the present state of civilization, cannot, with prudent thinkers, be expected to meet with much favor. In the first place, it implies a presumptuous confidence, and an overweening assumption, that naturally excite opposition, since they appear to court it. Beside this, it displays some ignorance, certainly, and a great deficiency of reverence, to slight the endeavors and actual experiments commenced, and in some instances consummated, by the wise counsellors of a past age. The aims of the reformer are too often wild and unsatisfactory. He employs little discrimination in his schemes of ameliorating the world. He would undo all that has been done; the good as well as the bad. He seems to consider the whole body politic as corrupt, rather than that certain portions of it are diseased. He looks on all present ills as pervading every part of it—as chronic disorders, instead of being merely local, and in many instances temporary, affections. Such is, too often, the picture of a modern reformer.

The true reformer, like Time, which Bacon represents as the greatest of innovators, is more cautious in bringing in new measures; before he concludes a plan, he first considers the cost. There are, doubtless, many evils in the world—much suffering—genuine wretchedness, not always brought on by folly or crime. There is ungenerous oppression, and virtual tyranny, and hardness of heart in the rich and powerful, and selfishness in the easy and luxurious. Still, evil is to be conquered by good, not by new evils.

The true government is that which teaches us to govern ourselves, and allows full scope for independent, but intelligent action. Reformers are apt to talk of government as if the people did not create the state, but rather the state the people.

Mr. Brownson is, perhaps, the most prominent example we can present of the general class of reformers.

The recent popular address, on the fifth of July, at Washington Hall, offers an occasion to speak of his traits as writer and speaker. As editor of the *Boston Quarterly*, he deserves this praise, at least, which is wholly unconnected with the tendency of his doctrines, of being the hardest working editor of a periodical, perhaps, in the country—gen-

erally writing two-thirds of every number of his *Review*. In his capacity of critic, Mr. Brownson's judgments are very far from infallible. He tries matters too much by a political standard. Moralists, poets, novelists, historians, if not strongly tinged with the spirit of democracy, are as bad as those not connected with the court, in the judgment of *Touchstone*—"Hast never been at court, Shepherd? thou art in a parlous state—thou art damned."

The style of these articles has great merits, and greater faults. It is full of vigor and ardent zeal; but to the last degree copious, and running over into diffuseness. At the same time, it is never a vague diffuseness. It is always clear and direct. Probably at first assumed for the purpose of impressing distinct ideas on common minds; of thoroughly imbuing vulgar judgments with his doctrines; the editor may have originated this manner for popular effect. It is just the style for the illiterate, from its admirable clearness and one-sided declamation. But it is not the style for scholars, nor for men of education. It is gold attenuated to the thinnest surface—to mere leaf. It is all surface, without depth or bulk. It is not a mine for the thinker, but rather a thin veil. It discloses all on the first reading.

The pamphlet, published last summer, on the laboring classes, which is the favorite subject of our reformer, has appeared in different shapes since in the *Review*, and latest of all, in the recent address. Much as we must dissent from it, in point of doctrine, we yet recognize in it many separate truths, and cannot but admire its popular form. The style in this, perhaps the best production of Mr. Brownson, is exactly adapted to its end. It has not a little of the personality of feeling, and colloquial energy that mark the political articles of Hazlitt, and if not so polished and terse as Paine, is freer, and even more popular in its tone.

At the address, delivered in Washington Hall, we sat attentive auditors, and we must candidly confess, often forgot the judgment we feel bound to exercise as critics, in our assent to the really valuable portions which displayed the bold and honest character of the man. Mr. Brownson told those of his audience who knew anything of the subject, nothing new. But to most who were present, the whole discourse was original. It certainly was original in force and spirit—the doctrines were old—the main ideas borrowed from Guizot's Lectures, (that storehouse of historical lectu-

ers); the leading theory was included in Dumas' Democracy, and some of the details in Dr. Channing's last lecture. Most of the body of the address was true and sound, but here and there *extravagances* were seen, arising from a disordered state of personal opinion and feeling. The high eulogy on the new French novels was utterly erroneous; the other literary illustrations very trite. Mr. Brownson speaks with considerable exasperation of feeling—there are waters of bitterness in him. Perhaps he has encountered hard trials, and untimed fortunes. We trust such experience will not alter the truth of abstract doctrines. The hits at Webster and Clay were a little far-fetched, and not quite just. Though we are in the habit of thinking of neither of these gentlemen except as able public men, and we see nothing *divine* in either, we still wish an outward observance of courtesy, particularly from a man of the force of character and ability of Mr. Brownson.

Much as we may find to censure in the previous writings of Mr. Brownson, and somewhat in this late address, we yet cannot help being impressed with his sincerity, and manliness of character. Right or wrong, Brownson is not a man to be put down by enemies. He may be reasoned with, not forced. He stands on his firm footing of humanity, and speaks independently of party, as a man. Though far from entertaining any supposed agrarian doctrines, we yet heartily sympathize with the generous views of Brownson. That we agree with his practical mode of carrying them out, we cannot affirm; since we consider him unsound in many particulars. Most of them we could not ourselves correct to advantage, but others can, and the legislator, it may be foreseen, must, sooner or later, take the matter in hand. Much is to be done for the laboring classes before they can wholly emancipate themselves. We know no man, at least in this country, who could do more for them by his pen, than Mr. Brownson. But he must be ruled by counsel, and work with moderation. Personally, we trust he may encounter as little difficulty in this noble work as his warmest friends would allow; and with these good wishes, we leave him. J.

MR. J. SILK BUCKINGHAM.*

IF it should ever occur to the admirers of mediocrity to erect a temple, and set it apart for their own exclusive and especial use, we respectfully suggest to them, as a prime ornament and conspicuous object of regard in the same, an image in wood of Mr. J. Silk Buckingham, the traveler, after the manner of the idols represented by Mr. Catherwood from Central America. Mr. Buckingham is the very Genius of common-place; being deficient, like the respectable idols aforesaid, in eyes, nose and ears, to see, hear and apprehend the objects he contemplates; with a mouth, however, at all times sufficiently obvious, and a tongue—and here he has the advantage as well of his worshippers as of the solemn functionaries of Mr. Catherwood—that constantly wags to and fro, with a burthen of truisms and trivialities.

Mr. Buckingham is essentially a mere talker; of any intermediate process between the fluency of public speaking against time and the refined arts of composition, he seems to have no conception.

Why Mr. Buckingham has written these three volumes octavo, published in London, we cannot tell, nor can we state any reason why he should not write three hundred more just like them. The style of composition of Mr. Buckingham realizes the idea of a perpetual motion; having in itself no discoverable principle of cessation, but ever running on, and on, and on—to the very crack of doom. It seems to be modelled somewhat on the large lottery wheel, with this difference, that the disconsolate reader gets nothing but blanks, put in his hand when he may. Jm

Mr. Buckingham had exhausted the patience of the old world, and like an old distinguished monarch sighed for new worlds to conquer. After the fashion of all potent conquerors, from the days of Knickerbocker downwards, he determined to commence his career by a public manifesto. He issued an address to the American people, which, for open vanity and ill-concealed insolence, has not been surpassed by the most impudent advertisement of quackery. He traced his course as a philanthropist through India and England;

* *America, Historical, Statistic and Descriptive.* By J. S. Buckingham, Esq. In three volumes. London: Fisher, Son & Co. 1841.

derived his profession of a lecturer from Socrates, Plato, Epicurus, through Marco Polo, Columbus, Camoens, Raleigh and Bruce, and summed up his own personal history in the persecutions and mode of life especially of Herodotus and Pythagoras. He declared himself engaged on a grand philanthropical tour, in which he was taking the United States by the way, to return by the Indian Archipelago and the Red Sea to London. The chief object of his visit was to lecture, and this it is believed he fully accomplished, exhausting every possible listener, wherever he went, from the lordly citizen who paid a dollar admission for the privilege, to the bourgeoisie at fifty cents, and the gatherings of the suburbs at twenty-five. Incidentally he was to examine the resources, institutions, literature and manners of the country. The study of the resources of the country, as we have seen, he found profitable; the institutions are properly described, as Peter Parley would describe them for children; of the literature we shall show he learnt nothing; and the manners he found in some things better, in others worse, than those of England. The people in the street were mostly better dressed; but in the Attic city of Boston his son was in danger of martyrdom as he passed through the streets, from the mob who detected his English blood—and the case was very little better when the youth was attended with a man servant.

One of the departments of inquiry that Mr. Buckingham proposed for himself was, an examination of the literature. Notwithstanding the extraordinary opportunities of investigation set forth in the introductory chapter, the result, dilated and extended by our author, is a mere *caput mortuum*,—there is not even the show of a few popular names. We shrewdly suspect from this, as well as the innate evidence of the writer's style, that literature is not the forte of Mr. Buckingham. If we may judge an author by the company he keeps, the literary acquaintances of our lecturer are of congenial dullness. The gods have not made Mr. Buckingham poetical, nor has any scholarship introduced him to the good society of the muse. The verses occasionally quoted, (with the exception of a few poems by Pierpont in an Appendix), are essentially commonplace. We have a few lines from "one of our English poets, Burroughs," that commence euphoniously:

Laws formed to harmonize contrarious creeds, &c.

and three stanzas that "breathe the spirit and feeling that seems to animate every American bosom," by "an American poet, Andrew M'Makin!"

Cradle of Independence, hail!
Within thy walls first breath'd the fire
Which, Heaven-directed, shall prevail,
'Till Time's own power itself expire.

Mr. Buckingham rarely gives us an opportunity to judge of his acquaintanceship with the state of his own native literature, but he does Thomas Campbell, "our own poet," the honor to attribute to him the lines of Smollet,

Thy spirit, Independence, let me share,
Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye.

After these things, we are not surprised at the paucity of our author's ideas developed on the literature he came to examine. We are not surprised to see "Mr. Dewey, an Unitarian clergyman," called the Editor of the New York Review, or the "Common School Union" pronounced "a cheap little paper, of more value and importance to the formation of the public mind and public morals of the rising generation of the United States, than all the other newspapers, magazines and reviews put together." Entertaining this view of the matter, and finding suitable literary nutriment in the food for the infant mind, Mr. Buckingham was certainly right in subscribing, as he informs us, for two hundred copies.

Of anything like anecdote, the volumes are remarkably deficient. Mr. Buckingham represents the Americans as a serious people, with little disposition for mirth; but the fault is not in the meagreness of American wit and humor, but in the impenetrable dullness of Mr. Buckingham. Laughter was profusely poured out before him—but he saw nothing, heard nothing. A harmless jest in the newspapers is only a symptom of levity; such specimens of originality as met his view are oddities, and mentioned with compassion. He is shocked at the unfeeling remark of an obituary in the Boston Centinel, recording of Deacon Coolidge, aged eighty-five, that he had subscribed to the Centinel for half a century, had always paid his bill punctually, and deserved a crown of glory!

In all this there is a want of ability to penetrate the source

of character. American editors, to the view of Mr. Buckingham and Mr. Cooper, are mere fools and rogues; the secret of their mirth and carelessness is not looked for in the actual circumstances of the country, judged by which it might be found to be genuine, but only thought of in comparison with a few journalists of the old world. The American newspaper editor is a man of great sense and humor, and it requires some sympathy with both these qualities, possessed in a higher degree than Mr. Buckingham enjoys, to appreciate them.

There is a single personal anecdote preserved by our author. It is of Mr. Webster, and, taken in connection with another popular anecdote of the same statesman, while it exhibits Mr. Buckingham's decency, affords an amusing parallel between the kitchen and the parlor. To leave a good impression of Mr. Webster, we will give our author's "leetle anecdote" first. Mr. B. accompanied the former to Newark, on a political excursion, and tells us that "Mr. Webster, though a handsome man, with fine large expressive eyes, beautiful teeth, and a commanding and intellectual countenance, has a remarkably brown complexion, so much so as a native of the south of Italy or Spain." After dinner, our narrator continues, Mr. Cushing, the representative from Massachusetts, "went into the kitchen to light his cigar," and returned with the following scrap of conversation from the servants: "Well, Betsey, we colored people may begin to hold up our heads now; for they say that Mr. Webster is to be the next president, and surely he ought to be in our favor, for he's as dark as any of us, and is a colored man himself." This is the unsophisticated language of the kitchen. Miss Sedgwick, in her forthcoming travels, writing of the saloons of London, among other observations upon Webster, mentions that of a painter, who exclaimed, "What a head! what eyes! what a mouth! and, my God! what coloring!"

Upon more important topics Mr. Buckingham seems equally deficient. In his researches into the economy of the New York bar, we shrewdly suspect him to have been accompanied by some idle facetious young member of the profession, not in the happy condition in which our author sets forth his brethren. The younger members of the profession, we are told, "readily make an income of three thousand dollars,—rising from this minimum to as much as ten thousand dollars! The smallest fee of a barrister of any standing and in almost

any cause, is one hundred dollars ! the greatest fee to the most distinguished barrister in any regular cause, tried in the city courts, is five thousand dollars !! but when a special cause of importance arises, as large a sum as twenty-five thousand dollars has been paid !!!” After this, we are told the judges are paid according to their *age*. We have no desire to injure the profession by disabusing the English mind of the truth of these innocent statements ; but as each member of Mr. Buckingham’s sentences rolled on, increasing so rapidly in amount, we must remark, we could not but tremble for his veracity and future spiritual welfare.

Whether such statements throw any collateral evidence on Mr. Buckingham’s oriental tales, as a lecturer, we leave to better judges than ourselves to determine. We have reluctantly noticed this book at all, for we have been more than once tempted to throw the page aside as we felt the thick deleterious atmosphere of dullness rising around us—but a sense of duty compelled us to proceed. We thought of Buckingham, bolstered in pulpits by men of clerical eminence and the distinguished public officials of the city, as he lectured to admiring audiences ; of the gaping attention and breathless wonderment with which his eastern fables were listened to ; of the public honors he received ; and of his parting desire, expressed in the introductory to these volumes, to give publicity to nothing to weaken with the American people “our reciprocal regard, or render my name and memory less revered among them or their children than it has hitherto had the honor and good fortune to be.” We, too, have our feelings in the matter, and earnestly beg Mr. Buckingham to withhold the three future threatened volumes. If he values at all the fruits of his assumption and plausibility, let him not hasten the rapid decline of his ephemeral notoriety—let him write no more.

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NOTORIETY.

A WRITER who could unite the philosophy of Bacon and the satire of Churchill, would be the author to undertake an essay on Notoriety. In the absence of any such extraordinary combination of talent, we venture to address ourselves to the subject ; to revive certain moral sentiments

of equal worth and antiquity, an abundant apology for which, if any were necessary, would be found in the very fact of the great excellence of the sentiments themselves.

Ancient fame has given place to modern notoriety. Solid repute is, nowadays, lost in fashionable applause, and the hero and bard, whose praise has furnished the theme of centuries, is cast into the shade by the idol of the hour. Of the different varieties of notoriety attainable by the arts of intrigue, the quackeries of impudence, or the settled fraud of a lifetime, we shall, after running over the titles of a few, confine ourselves at present, chiefly to notoriety in literature, to the means of making a reputation by cant, imposture, and the influence of fashion.

Notoriety is spurious fame; a desire of obtaining it, false ambition. One intoxicated with the love of public fame, (in the lower view of fame), had rather be ill known than unknown. At any sacrifice, he would make a name. He would be talked of, if not cared for; had rather be in men's mouths than in their hearts. He would be well spoken of rather than trivially thought of. It is not that he would be always praised—nay, sometimes he would prefer abuse, as an object of attack, and to give him an opportunity of replying to it. It is the weak man's diseased ambition; the fool's fame; the knave's bane; the courtier's life; the fopling's breath; the wise man's detestation; the honest man's disgust.

Notoriety is attached to every calling and profession, art, science, trade or mystery. There is nothing in life which it may not affect; no face it cannot assume.

It haunts the pulpit, the university, the bar, the surgeon's hall; it is found in political assemblies and literary meetings; it rules supreme in the drawing-room, the theatre, the street, the watering place, the tavern.

What ways and means are employed to accomplish the great end; what struggles and anxieties to appear what one is not; what endeavors to hide these very attempts. A private scandal, or a newspaper paragraph; an abusive letter written by the party in question to himself; a self-inflicted libel; a domestic quarrel; a course of libertinism made public; these are a few of the thousand baits to catch the public ear. A public official relieves a poor woman, the act is at once translated into the newspapers; a wealthy citizen has fallen ill, it is immediately chronicled; a valuable shawl is worn by the wife of a celebrated statesman,

it is universally made known. It is the whole business of the entire lives of most of the butterflies of fashion, to plot how they shall make themselves conspicuous from day to day. Absurdities in dress or equipage, are getting to be stale devices; what we shall have next, we are wanting in imagination to conceive.

How to make a reputation in letters, is a nice problem for him to solve who has neither learning, genius, talents nor enthusiasm. It is generally persons devoid of these fundamental requisites, that most affect the fame of author and scholar; though it must be confessed, their purposes are ulterior, and do not rest in the bare enjoyment of a name. They catch at the chance of reputation for the sake of an introduction into what is called (one would think from irony) good society, or for the mere gratification of seeing their names in print.

Cant in literature is, next to cant in religion, the most despicable thing in the world; the cant of the pretenders to literature is always so thorough-going as quite to obscure a really worthy but modest scholar. The quack will carry off by far the plurality of votes by the mere force of external display.

Fashion is never more absurd than in her patronage of letters. She inevitably mistakes pretence for performance, and fails to distinguish between merit and presumption. A fashionable author is, generally, a writer whose books are read only by people of fashion, and that only for a season or two. The fashionable author is made such, more by his manner and address, than by any quality in his writings worthy of notice. He dresses well, therefore takes rank as an elegant poet: he can carve neatly, hence is granted station as a critic or philosopher. The true poet, the genuine philosopher, is never fashionable—except as an incident to his reputation—it being a peculiar quality of the servile crowd to join in wherever they hear a shout. The great author writes for the whole world; the writer of fashion for a very circumscribed sphere or clique of readers. What is in cant phrase styled the “great world” of fashion, is, in fact, the most insignificant field of authorship. Fashionable people take more pleasure in creating reputation out of nothing, than in worshipping established idols, inasmuch as it gratifies their self-love. Of an inferior scribbler they make a genius for a season, and then cast him off, as

they do their tailor or their hounds—whence, the poor victim readily concludes, or should, that notoriety, like all matters of fashion, is merely a reigning folly, a current prejudice.

Somewhat connected with the subject of fashionable reputation, is the question of the public taste, more influenced by mere notoriety, than, perhaps, most readers imagine.

As a general rule, the public taste is vicious to a great degree. This is abundantly proved by the innumerable instances of ephemeral popularity, and consequent neglect of many, perhaps of most writers. Their works happen to hit a particular taste, or favor a prevailing fashion; they chime in with the prejudices, and foster the passions of the day, and are rewarded by a short-lived reputation. In judging of poetry, in particular, one can hardly be too fastidious, who recollects that at one time, Jonson lorded it over Shakspeare: at another, Cato was esteemed the first of English tragedies: and still later, Darwin and Hayley were thought great poets. How many schools are extinct, how many great men have proved in the eyes of posterity, (that severe judge), very small persons indeed. How many philosophical systems have been consigned to oblivion, with their inventors and promulgators! What shoals of tragedies, epics, novels of every description, lives, travels, sermons, speeches and periodicals, choke up the river of Lethe—across that stream who can venture unless first drugged to sleep by the pages of a writer

Sleepless himself, to give his readers sleep.

Taste is a natural sensibility to excellence, heightened by the nicest observation, and perfected by close study. If we allow this, how dare the great multitude of readers to set up their critical claims. Every man now is a reader, and a critic of course. What a monstrous absurdity is this! In other things, we see its ridiculousness, but we seem blind here.

The purest poetry and the noblest philosophy, are so much above the comprehension of vulgar minds, that they never can be popular—so with the most delicate wit and humor, and the finest works of fancy. Pure language, and an elegant simplicity, are also out of the reach of common intellects.

Sure fame is a very different thing from notoriety. Cowley has placed the idea of fame in the proper light. He says, "I love and commend a *true good fame*, because it is

the shadow of virtue: not that it doth any good to the body which it accompanies, but it is an efficacious shadow, and, like that of St. Peter, cures the diseases of others.* The true fame is "that which follows, not that which is run after;" the companion of goodness, not the lacquey of fashion.

We have treated notoriety as a fraud of men; it is sometimes the dream of youth—an honest dream. When we are young, we are goaded by a false impulse, and would be famous without any regard to the conditions of obtaining fame; but when years have brought a certain equable gravity of temper, and calmness of judgment, we begin to see things in their true colors, and to value a life of virtue above a life of honors. We at last discover the pitiful shifts of those who would obtain notoriety, and the incredible meannesses to which they subject themselves, by their ignorant zeal in the pursuit of worldly glory. Titles, wealth, applause, what chimeras ye are! what bubbles ye make of us your greedy followers! The highest powers of intellect, the most brilliant gems of poesy, are incomparably inferior to the possession of a peaceful conscience, and a heart filled with none but good intentions.

The fame of the popular poet, or the great general, has an almost overpowering charm for the young man; but a later age, which cools his blood, clears his mind also, and he only wonders how he ever happened to entertain such images of greatness, as the gods of his idolatry. The flashes of the skilful rhetorician captivate the youthful student; but the powers of the philosophic reasoner attract his maturer judgment. Light, airy poetry, is fit food for the raw critic; but experience and reflection give the palm to a deeper and more majestic vein. Amusement gains us then, but instruction holds us now. Then, we imagine we have learnt all that is to be known; now, we feel our real ignorance of the highest mysteries, and would die learning. Thus we see the love of applause (in its place, and in its integrity, a noble incentive to generous action), is still an insufficient motive. Milton, in that well known passage, which summons all the powers of the soul as with the sound of a trumpet,† has written nobly of fame—as

The spur which the clear spirit doth raise,

* Essay, Of Obscurity.
VOL. II.—NO. IX.

† Sir Philip Sydney.

Though he feels obliged to add,

(That last infirmity of noble minds,
To scorn delights and live laborious days.

Yet as fame is not altogether of a disinterested nature, (though the interestedness is of the highest character), it cannot furnish the only sure foundation for a life of virtue. The sense of duty is our only resource; and on that, as on an eternal and immutable foundation, we may erect a superstructure as high as our genius may serve to raise it, sacred to both genius and virtue.

J.

A FANTASY PIECE.

FROM ERNST T. W. HOFFMANN.

THIS is a slight sketch, a transcript of the visions of the German, Hoffmann; a man of genius, eccentricity and passion, who lived intensely, and consumed, at a fiercer rate than it is fortunately the lot of most to comprehend, his physical energies in wild bursts of indulgence and excitement. Life for him had many trials which he bore with honor, but in others he failed. His admirable critic, Carlyle, who has measured the man and his works by the same high standard he has applied to Burns, admits his defects in Art and Morality, but not less wisely than charitably, adds, "among the ordinary population of this world, to note him with the mark of reprobation were ungrateful and unjust."

Hoffmann's fantastical tales were echoes of his own moody humors. He was struck with the genius of Callot, an old painter of the seventeenth century, whose burlesque vein, united with a fondness of his own for caricature painting, he transferred to his writings. "A whole scale," says Carlyle, "of the most wayward and unearthly humors, stands recorded in his diary; his head was forever swarming with beautiful or horrible chimeras; a common incident could throw his whole being into tumult, a distorted face or figure would abide with him for days, and rule over him like a spell. It was not things, but 'the shows of things' that he saw; and the world and its business, in which he had to live and move, often hovered before him, like a perplexed and spectral vision." One of these visions is translated in the fol-

lowing pages. It is an incident at Berlin of the night of St. Sylvester, which will be recognized by all readers of old almanacs, where such matters are registered, as our own New Year's eve. Those who have made the acquaintance of the wonderful Peter Schlemihl, in La Motte Fouqué's Tale, (as who has not ?) will be pleased to get another glimpse of his wayward movements in the scene at the Cabaret, and to all we commend the sentiment and moral which will be always found to lurk under the most eccentric productions of the author, who is, as in this case, a man of genius.

THE CABARET.

Promenading among lindens may doubtless be very agreeable at times, except upon the night of St. Sylvester, when the frost is splitting the stones, and the storm is driving against the face whirlwinds of snow. For myself, I came to this satisfactory conclusion as I ran bare-headed and cloakless, while the night wind met the fevered gusts of heat in my frame. I passed the bridge of the opera near the chateau; I turned again and traversed the Pont-aux-Ecluses, leaving the Exchange behind me. I was in the street of the Chasseurs, near the shop of Thiermann. The soft light shone from the windows: I was about to enter, for I was perishing with cold and dying with thirst, when a noisy troop issued forth in great force. They were talking of superb oysters, and the delicious vintage of 1811. I involuntarily made a few steps in the street, and stopped before a cabaret illuminated by one single light. Henry V. of Shakspeare was once reduced to such a degree of weariness and modesty as to think of the poor creature, small-beer. The same thing happened to myself. I felt thirsty for a bottle of good English beer, and threw myself speedily into the inn. "What will you have, sir?" said the inn-keeper, who advanced towards me cheerfully, touching his bonnet with his hand. I called for a bottle of beer, a pipe and tobacco, and soon found myself in a state of quietude so profound that the devil himself respected it and left me in repose.

Without hat or cloak, I must have appeared singular enough to the worthy inmates. Some query was lost on the lips of the host as there was heard a knocking at the window. A voice cried out in a high pitch for admission. The inn-keeper made his exit in a hurry, and returned immediately, holding two lights aloft in his hands, followed by a tall thin man. In

passing beneath the low portal, he neglected to stoop, and struck his head roughly, but a black bonnet he wore received the blow and preserved him safe from all harm. He took particular care to pass as closely as possible to the wall and seat himself before me, face to face, while the lights were placed on the table. He might be said to wear the look of a fascinating and at the same time discontented man. He called angrily for beer and a pipe, which he had scarcely whiffed when we were enveloped in a cloud of smoke. Withal his physiognomy was so characteristic and attractive, that I was charmed with him at once, in spite of his gloomy manner. His hair, black and abundant, was separated in front and fell on each side in curls resembling the portraits of Rubens. When he threw off his vast cloak, I saw that he was dressed in a black kurtka, ornamented by various folds; but what surprised me more was, that he wore elegant slippers over his boots. I noticed, as he shook his pipe, that he had smoked it in five minutes. Conversation was kept up with difficulty between us; the stranger appeared too much occupied with all sorts of rare plants, which he drew from a traveling bag and examined with interest. I testified my admiration for his beautiful plants, and as they appeared freshly gathered I asked if he had obtained them in the Botanic Garden or from Boucher. He smiled oddly as he replied, "Botany does not seem to be your forte; otherwise you never had asked a question so,"—he hesitated—I added in a low tone, "so ridiculous." "Exactly," he answered, with no little frankness; "an eye more practiced than your own would have recognized at once these Alpine plants, such as grow on the summit of Chimborazo."

The stranger pronounced these last words in a low tone, and the reader may well imagine they threw me into a very remarkable state of mind. Questions died upon my lips, but confused presentiments arose before me, and it seemed that without having often seen the stranger, I had at least dreamt of him.

There was a fresh knock at the window; the host opened the door, and a voice was heard, "Have the goodness to cover your mirror!"

"Ah! ah!" said the host, "it is General Suwarow, who comes something late." The landlord covered the mirror, when a little weakly man leapt into the cellar with clumsy speed, or if I may be allowed the expression, with a ponde-

rous levity. He wore a mantle of a singular color, verging upon brown, and whilst the little man frisked about the chamber, the mantle, which formed innumerable folds, floated around him in an incredible manner, so that by the light of the flambeaux there seemed a crowd of figures to unfold and return upon themselves again like the phantasmagoria of Ensler. He continually rubbed one hand against the other under his capacious sleeves, crying out, "cold, cold, it is cold indeed; in Italy, it is another thing, a different element entirely." He finally seated himself between the first stranger and myself. "Here is an insupportable smoke," said he, "tobacco upon tobacco—if I had only a pinch." I had with me a tobacco box of polished steel, which had been given me as a present. I drew it from my pocket, intending to offer a pinch to my little neighbor—who scarcely perceived it when he seized it violently with both hands, and thrust it back, crying out, "away! away! the abominable mirror!"

His voice inspired me with horror, and when I raised my eyes to look at him, he had become quite another person. The diminutive gentleman had leapt into the cellar with a sportive and youthful physiognomy—now, his visage was pale, withered, with the furrows of an old man about his hollow eyes. Affrighted, I approached his neighbor. I desired to warn him, but he took no part in what was passing, wholly absorbed in the contemplation of his plants from Chimborazo. At this moment, Suwarow demanded "some wine of the north," in phraseology not at all well picked. Conversation somewhat animated him after a while, but the man in the cloak did not wholly reconcile me to him again: but the other could speak of apparently the most frivolous things with grace and meaning, although he had to contend with a strange language, sometimes introducing unaccustomed words, which only gave his remarks a more piquant originality. Thus gaining rapidly in my esteem, he weakened the disagreeable impression of his chance companion.

The latter individual seemed to be seated on springs, for he did nothing but move his chair from one side to the other; he gesticulated rapidly with both hands, but a torrent of cold sweat ran from my hair when I ascertained clearly that he used two different faces. Above all he affected to get back his first visage to look upon our companion, whose calm and tranquil air contrasted with his mobility.

In this grand masquerade they call life, often the spirit

looks out with keen eye beyond its mask, recognizing those of its kind, as it happened to us three persons, so wholly different from the rest of men, we looked upon, and knew one another in the cabaret. Our conversation took the sombre turn, incident only to those souls deeply diseased, wounded to death. "There's another nail standing out in the path of life," said the earliest of my two acquaintances. "Heavens! sir," I exclaimed, "how busy the devil is in fixing nails for us in all places; in the walls of our apartments, in the woods, in the thickets of roses. We pass no place without leaving there something of our spoils. It appears to me, gentlemen, that each one of us has met with some similar loss. I, for one, have lost this evening my hat and cloak, both are suspended on a nail, as you say, in the antechamber of the counsellor of justice."

The little man and his companion started as if they had been struck by an unforeseen blow. The dwarf looked upon me frightfully, with his ancient countenance, but jumped promptly on a chair, and re-fastened the veil which hung over the mirror, whilst the other carefully snuffed the candles. Conversation was renewed with difficulty. A young painter was spoken of, by the name of Philip, who had just finished the portrait of a princess, inspired in his work by the genius of love, and the desire of perfection religiously planted in his soul by his sincere passion. "It is a striking likeness," said the stranger, "but it is not a portrait—it is the very reflection of her image." "It is indeed," I answered, "as much as if it were stolen from the glass."

The shorter gentleman thrust himself violently out of his chair, and regarding me with his *old* visage, and with eyes burning with anger, cried out, "it is ridiculous—it is insanity. Who could steal an image from the glass? was it the devil did it? Yes, yes, my good sir, he would break the glass with his blunt claws, and cover with his wounds and blood the white and delicate hands of a lady's image. It is madness. Give *me* the image stolen out of a mirror, and I will send it a dangerous journey of two or three thousand miles in the air—the stupid idea!"

His neighbor got up, stepped toward our companion, and remarked, "be a little less embarrassed, my friend, a little more modest, for I am pretty well assured, that your own reflection is in a rather pitiable condition." "Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the dwarf; "that indeed is said with a good grace.

I, at least, carry with me my beautiful shadow, you miserable scoundrel, I have, at least, my shadow." At these words, he fled; we heard him laughing and dancing in the street, "my shadow—I have, at least, my shadow."

My remaining companion had fallen in his chair, pale and breathless; he leant his head on his hands, and drew a stifling sigh from the bottom of his breast. "What is the matter with you?" I asked with eagerness. "Oh, my dear sir," he replied, "this wretched fellow who has so villianously appeared to us, who has followed me to this cellar, my customary cabaret, where I have ordinarily been alone, or at worst, visited by some imp who would squat under the table and mump the crumbs of bread—this vile fellow has plunged me in an abyss of misfortunes. Alas, I have lost without return, my ——— adieu!"

He rose, traversed the chamber, and gained the door. All was brilliant around him—he projected no shadow. Ravished, I ran in pursuit. Peter Schlemihl! Peter Schlemihl! I cried, full of joy; but he had thrown off his slippers. I saw him pass before the barracks of the gendarmes, and disappear in the night.

When I wished to return to the cellar, the innkeeper shut the door in my face, and cried, "God preserve me from such guests!"

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THE CITY ARTICLE.

DUTIES ON FOREIGN BOOKS.

THE important question of the tariff is one that is likely, ere long, to claim the particular attention of Congress. The friends of the Protective System and the advocates of Free Trade, will probably soon be engaged in a fierce conflict of interests, and the arguments of each of the contending parties, in the form of pamphlets, speeches and newspaper essays, may possibly deluge our land, as in the former days of nullification and proclamations. Fortunately for us and our argument, we are compelled, in the present instance, to side with neither party, and may, without the least detriment to our cause, preserve the most determined silence as regards our individual sentiments on this exciting subject.

We are in favor of a reform, indeed, in our present revenue laws; but it is one in which so few are interested, and of so unobtrusive a class, that we fear if we should fail to speak in their behalf, they, from sheer diffidence, would suffer their interests to be again overlooked, as they have heretofore done in times past. Unlike the overgrown capitalist seeking employment for his surplus wealth, or the vigilant agriculturalist watching every enactment that may impair his annual receipts, the student is too apt to shrink from a contest when his own interests are the only ones to be protected. Refined in his feelings, a sense of delicacy is too often apt to interfere with his advancement, and the justice he is entitled to he is more apt to solicit as a favor, than to demand as a right. Upon this class, as we shall show, the present duties on Foreign Books press heavily, and a modification, or rather a repeal of them, is due, as well from its intrinsic claims, as from the magnanimity of the government.

By our present tariff of duties, all books in the English language, not specially imported for the use of public institutions of learning, published prior to the year 1775, are chargeable on importation with a duty of four cents per volume. By the construction given to this law, and by which our officers of the customs are guided, dictionaries and lexicons, printed in France or Germany, if half English, or if the definitions alone be in English, are charged with the full rate of duties, as if they were published in England, or the contents were entirely in our own language. So far has this rule of construction been carried, that a Chinese and English lexicon, printed at Canton, has been decided to be within the operation of this law.

Duties on importations are either for the purpose of raising a revenue for the support of the state, or for the protection of the industry of the country. We propose to inquire whether by our present laws either of these purposes has been materially advanced.

Viewed as a question of finance, the duties above mentioned can hardly claim any considerable attention at our hands. The total amount of receipts in any one year, from this source, and we are willing to take the most favorable one, scarcely exceeded the sum of thirty thousand dollars, a sum wholly insignificant, and which is still further reduced by the extra expense attendant on its collection. To secure to

the government this pitiful amount, (if such *could* have been the intention of our national legislature), books of the utmost value to the scholar, have, from the limited number imported, been rendered extremely difficult of acquisition, or in other cases, from the great enhancement of their price, placed utterly beyond the reach of all except the most opulent.

In illustration of the operation of our present system, we shall avail ourselves of some important facts, furnished us by an intelligent friend, upon whose knowledge and veracity we place the fullest reliance: stating first, however, what should have been mentioned before, in connexion with our reference to the duties prior to 1775; namely, that books published subsequent to that year, are charged at the rate of about 26 cents per pound, in sheets or boards, and 30 cents in leather.

The Philosophical Transactions are large quarto volumes and generally bound; cost about \$10 each, duty averages \$3 each, or more than \$150 on the volumes since 1775.

Gentleman's Magazine, 170 volumes, 8vo., costs in London, about £20; the volumes weigh 2 to 2½ each, and the duty on those published since 1775, is more than the cost of the same.

Pinkerton's Collection of Voyages and Travels, 17 large quarto volumes. This work, bound, weighs about 100 lbs., and the duty is more than the original cost.

Cook's Voyages, 8 large quarto volumes and 1 folio, plates and maps; costs in London about \$25, duty 50 per cent.

Parliamentary History of England, by Hausard, 32 vols. royal octavo; duty more than the original cost.

Playfair's Family Antiquities, nine very large imperial quartos; the duty on this book is *twice* the original cost in London.

Sir Wm. Jones' Works, 7 volumes, quarto. Lord Oxford's Works, 8 volumes, quarto. Asiatic Researches, 18 vols. quarto. The Transactions of the various Literary and Scientific Societies, which are usually printed in large quarto vols. Rapin and Tindall's History of England, 5 large folio volumes. Hargrave's State Trials, 11 volumes, folio. Howell's State Trials, 32 volumes, royal octavo. The Literary Gazette, 20 volumes, quarto, and other periodicals in long series, pay a duty amounting from 50 to 100 per cent on their original cost. None of the foregoing have ever been

published in this country, nor will they ever be. The London editions are sufficiently large to supply the demand both in Europe and America.

Such are the works which, together with an immense number of scientific and philosophical books, treatises on the fine arts, and works on theology, are virtually withheld from the eager curiosity of the scholar, or granted him only upon terms more extravagant than are demanded for an indulgence in the most corrupting luxuries which the whims or the caprice of the wealthy may suggest. The revenue derived from this source, affords no satisfactory excuse for this injustice.

Is this tax upon knowledge imposed for the protection of domestic industry? are these heavy charges imposed on the student for the building up of our home manufactures? Perhaps such was the intention of the legislature. Yet if it were, the measure has been signally inoperative. Our vast and increasing trade in books owes not its success to such expedients. The success of this branch of domestic industry must be ascribed to other and far different causes. These duties, heavy as they are, and oppressive as they have been felt to be by the scholar, have afforded scarcely appreciable protection to our publishers. Their protection has been found in the very different styles of publication required by the reading portions of the two countries. Added to this, the want of an international copyright law has saved them the charge of any remuneration to the author, they are spared the difference in expense between printing from manuscript and letter-press, and wholly escape the heavy tax which in England the advertising of a new work imposes.

These advantages surely serve as a protection, an ample protection, to our publishers. They require no duties such as are at present imposed, to secure for their reprints a monopoly of our market.

The chief reprints in our country are of works of a class thus adequately protected. They consist of novels, popular histories, popular theology, scientific compends, short treatises on ethics, with works purely literary. That this is the case, a comparative view of the prices charged in both countries will satisfy the most skeptical.

In England, the ordinary price of a popular novel is \$7.87; here, the cost of the same work rarely exceeds \$1 or \$1.50. Turner's *Anglo Saxons* costs abroad \$13; with us, not to ex-

ceed \$5. Ranke's Popes, \$12; our reprint \$5,50. Campbell's Petrarch, over \$7; here republished for \$2,50. The London prices are exclusive of duties.

The reader will perceive in an instant that duties are not required to protect these works. The causes before mentioned afford a sufficient protection, and any addition to the foreign cost serves only as a tax upon the scholar, who may require for purposes of reference, access to the originals.

It may perhaps be urged that were we to remove all duties from foreign books, publishers abroad, finding thus opened to their enterprise a new and rapidly extending field, would soon accommodate their style of publication to the wants and the taste of the market they had to supply. That such would not be the case, their present practice evinces. Great Britain has ere this offered bounties on exportation, and would be likely to do so now, were she able to secure a monopoly of this important trade. But the disadvantages under which she labors are not thus easily to be overcome. The attempt is too wild ever to be made by a nation of her intelligence. The activity of our citizens, their local facilities, and the peculiar knowledge absolutely requisite for this trade, must tend to secure for us (independently of the feeble protection of the tariff) this important branch of domestic manufacture.

Looking at the subject in this light, are there any valid grounds for the retention of our present duties? Insignificant in point of revenue, they are inefficient for the purpose of protection. The law operates only on such works as it is the interest of the country should be disseminated as extensively as possible among our citizens. Works which, from their size, their scientific character, and their want of popular interest, it would be ruinous to reprint. Upon a class of works of which the quantity abroad is sufficient for the present race of students. Through the impolicy of our legislation, our scholars are debarred from the advantages to be derived from these works, save through a recourse to colleges or public libraries. Our population is sparse and widely diffused. Hence this provision is necessarily insufficient. Many of our most studious and intelligent citizens must of necessity reside at such a distance from these depositaries as to render a reference to them inconvenient, both from the loss of time and the attendant expense. That this deserving class is neither few in number or deficient in influence, all must admit. The physician, the lawyer, the divine, the statesman,

and the student proper, are scattered throughout every village and hamlet of this extended republic. If less distinguished than their fellows in older countries, very much of the fault must remain with the government, that with a suicidal policy has to the extent of its ability withheld from them the necessary means of advancement.

In behalf of this class, therefore, we would ask the attention of the public and their representatives to this subject. We are willing that the latter should adopt such restrictions—consistent with an enlarged justice—as may be requisite to protect our publishers; but we require that in consideration of this subject they should think also of the scholar, nor suffer his equitable claims to be set aside. He is worthy to be so thought of. Unobtrusive and retiring though he may be, he is still affecting, for good or for evil, the opinions and the conduct of the public. Let us render this silent but effective agency productive of good alone—by allowing him to supply himself as cheaply as is possible with the means of strengthening his reason, maturing his judgment and correcting his opinions. The people cannot be otherwise than gainers by so doing—in the increased amount of useful knowledge, correct notions and scientific truth, they will find an ample reward for this mere act of justice.

Sadett.

THE LOITERER.

The Zincali; or an account of the Gypsies of Spain, with an original collection of their songs and poetry, and a copious dictionary of their language. BY GEORGE BORROW, late Agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Spain. In 2 vols. London: John Murray. 1841.

THIS is an extraordinary book on an extraordinary subject, and one that by the novelty and interest of its details will better repay perusal, than any other volumes of the season. It is chiefly an account of the Spanish gypsies, though it contains many curious hints and reflections upon gypsy life in all parts of the world. It is written by a man of sense and spirit, the first stranger to the race ever, perhaps, conversant with their language, habits, modes of thinking and acting. The account he has presented is free from all conventional ideas, has nothing of the stage or novel in

its story, but is drawn as it were from the very life and breath of the people. Mr. Borrow had always devoted particular attention to the language and manners of gypsy life, and when he found himself in Spain, an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, he turned his acquaintanceship to account, and employed his new friends as agents for the furtherance of his missionary operations. They carried the Bibles to others out of good will to a brother Rommany (thus they term one another in their native language) but profited little themselves. He spoke their language, and they believed him an ancient member of the craft, at present existing on the world in a state of metempsychosis. They unmasked to him their dwellings, their ceremonies, their thefts and rogueries, and when he preached to them they received his words with a blank incredulity. At one time, he called them together in a congregation, and one of them commenced and concluded all ceremony by asking him for two ounces of gold; at another he drew a heightened picture of the Israelites in Egypt, whom he compared to the gypsies in Spain, but looking round at the close, he found the countenance of each auditor fixed in one perverse, unmitigated squint. They were incorrigible, and Mr. Borrow went on with his observations.

Notwithstanding his situation, our author is clearly a man of the world. He has a strong dash of the gypsy in himself, sufficient, we fear, to disqualify him for active membership in any Bible Society extant among us. We hear of hearty livers in the church, and of fox-hunting clergy in England, but this is the first time a man of so spicy and jovial a character ever turned up before us in the dress of a missionary. The author, we are inclined to believe with the Rommany, is a real brother of the craft, a full blooded descendant of the monarch recorded in song.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he;
He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl,
And he called for his fiddlers three.

The first business in life, with Mr. Borrow, was to become thoroughly acquainted with the gypsies, following them into whatever haunts he might; he did accompany them in doubtful places, his knowledge of them is universal, and much do we rejoice, sitting afar away in a distant country, where gypsies yet are a subject of speculation only, at the fruits of his investigations.

The social morality of the Spanish gypsies would have puzzled Montaigne: apparently destitute and abandoned, barbarous in the midst of civilization, rogues in principle and cheats by profession, they subsist on the very outskirts of society, with just enough virtue to hold them together and preserve the race in a stubborn independence. As the body is sometimes indurated to

resist disease and contagion, their souls appear to have gone through some hardening process, by which they are proof against the ordinary laws of morality. Of compunction and regret for many of those crimes for which the civilized man feels remorse, they are conscience proof; they can steal with pleasure, and enjoy the fruits of victory with an unblushing, unrepenting effrontery, it requires years of hard practice for a dishonest attorney to assume; yet, in their own way, they acknowledge the existence of certain virtues which they preserve with as honorable or devoted a feeling as ever a merchant stickled for his integrity, or a saint for the crown of martyrdom. The men are rogues and cheats, but they eschew drunkenness; the women are lascivious and procuresses, but they worship chastity and keep it with life.

The poetry of the Zincali is traditionary, or created in the enthusiasm of the moment as the gypsy is struck by some passing incident of life or manners, some momentary thought which impresses itself upon his mind in the interval of his usual avocations of cheating, shearing of mules, horse-stealing or fortune-telling. The rhyme and the mode of recitation give it its best claims to the name—for of poetry written to be read and admired, they know nothing; but in scattered fragments of morality and chance reflectors in verse, the burden of a lonely hour, the recitative of a joyous meeting, they have much. The rhymes of the Gitános disclose good honest gypsy sentiment, or in other words, a very roguish one-sided view of things; yet with occasional sentiment and glimpses of a better order of society. From Mr. Borrow's specimens we select a few instances of all kinds. Aphoristic as the poetry of the Dial, the gypsy verses are at any rate sufficiently clear and practical. Witness the bard who sings:

There runs a swine down yonder hill,
As fast as e'er he can,
And as he runs he crieth still,
Come steal me, gypsy man.

A better brother of the craft records—

Along the pathway as I trod,
A beggar met my eye,
And at her cries the Almighty God
Descended from the sky.

Here, too, is affection and beautiful simplicity—

Extend to me the hand so small,
Wherein I see thee weep,
For O! thy balmy tear-drops all
I would collect and keep.

The work is miscellaneous in its character, full of personal incident, sketches of passing scenes, historic reminiscences and an

ample gathering of materials for the learned. Though not so carefully digested as we might have wished, it is, in its spirit, clearness, and a rough honesty of expression, the true book to admit the reader to a genuine acquaintance with gypsy character. As an instance of the writer's graphic enthusiastic vein, we select a sketch of the Gypsy of Seville, a fine example of vivid painting, rather than description only.

THE GITANA OF SEVILLE.

She is standing before the portal of a large house, in one of the narrow Moorish streets of the capital of Andalusia; through the grated iron door she looks in upon the court; it is paved with marble slabs of almost snowy whiteness; in the middle is a fountain distilling limpid water, and all around there is a profusion of macetas, in which flowery plants and aromatic shrubs are growing, and at each corner there is an orange tree, and the perfume of the azabin may be distinguished; you hear the melody of birds from a small aviary beneath the piazza which surrounds the court, which is surmounted by a toldo or linen awning, for it is the commencement of May, and the glorious sun of Andalusia is burning with a splendor too intense for his rays to be borne with impunity. It is a fairy scene, such as nowhere meets the eye but at Seville, or perhaps at Fez and Shirez, in the palaces of the Sultan and the Shah. The gypsy looks through the iron-grated door, and beholds, seated near the fountain, a richly dressed dame and two lovely delicate maidens; they are busied at their morning's occupation, intertwining with their sharp needles the gold and silk on the tambours; several female attendants are seated behind. The gypsy pulls the bell, when is heard the soft cry of "Quien es;" the door, unlocked by means of a string, recedes upon its hinges, when in walks the Gitána, the witch-wife of Multan, with a look such as the tiger-cat casts when she stealeth from the jungle unto the plain.

Yes, well may you exclaim "Ave Maria purissima," ye dames and maidens of Seville, as she advances towards you; she is not of yourselves, she is not of your blood, she or her fathers have walked to your clime from a distance of three thousand leagues. She has come from the far east, like the three enchanted kings to Cologne; but unlike them, she and her race have come with hate and not with love. She comes to flatter, and to deceive, and to rob, for she is a lying prophetess, and a she Thug; she will greet you with blessings which will make your hearts rejoice, but your hearts' blood would freeze, could you hear the curses which to herself she murmurs against you; for she says, that in her children's veins flows the dark blood of the "husbands," whilst in those of yours flows the pale tide of the "savages," and therefore she would gladly set her foot on all your corpses first poisoned by her hands. For all her love—and she can love—is for the Romas; and all her hate—and who can hate like her?—is for the Busnees; for she says the world would be a fair world were there no Busnees, and if the Romanibs could beat their kettles undisturbed at the foot of the olive trees; and therefore she would kill them all if she could and if she dared. She never seeks the houses of the Busnees but for the purpose of prey; for the wild animals of the arena do not more abhor the sight of man, than she abhors the countenances of the Busnees. She now comes to prey upon you and to scoff at you. Will you believe her words? Fools! do you think that the being before ye has any sympathy for the like of you?

She is of the middle stature, neither strongly nor slightly built, and yet her every movement denotes agility and vigor. As she stands erect before you, she appears like a falcon about to soar, and you are almost tempted to believe

that the power of volition is hers; and were you to stretch forth your hand to seize her, she would spring above the house-tops like a bird. Her face is oval, and her features are regular, but somewhat hard and coarse, for she was born amongst rocks in a thicket, and she has been wind-beaten and sun-scorched for many a year, even like her parents before her; there is many a speck upon her cheek, and perhaps a scar, but no dimples of love; and her brow is wrinkled over, though she is yet young. Her complexion is more than dark, for it is almost that of a Mulatto; and her hair, which hangs in long locks on either side of her face, is black as coal, and coarse as the tail of a horse, from which it seems to have been gathered.

There is no female eye in Seville can support the glances of hers, so fierce and penetrating, and yet so artful and sly, is the expression of their dark orbs; her mouth is fine and almost delicate, and there is not a queen on the proudest throne between Madrid and Moscow who might not, and would not, envy the white and even rows of teeth which adorn it, which seem not of pearl, but of the finest elephant's bone of Multan. She comes not alone; a swarthy two-year-old bantling clasps her neck with one arm, its naked body half extant from the coarse blanket which, drawn round her shoulders, is secured at her bosom by a skewer. Though tender of age, it looks wicked and sly, like a veritable imp of Roma. Huge rings of false gold dangle from wide slits from the lobes of her ears; her nether garments are rags, and her feet are cased in hempen sandals. Such is the wandering Gitána, such is the witch-wife of Multan, who has come to spae the fortune of the Sevillian countess and her daughters.

"O! may the blessing of Egypt light upon your head, you high-born lady! (May an evil end overtake your body, daughter of a Busnee harlot!) and may the same blessing await the two fair roses of the Nile here flowering by your side! (May evil Moors seize them and carry them across the water!) O! listen to the words of the poor woman who is come from a distant country; she is of a wise people, though it has pleased the God of the sky to punish them for their sins by sending them to wander through the world. They denied shelter to the Majori, whom you call the queen of heaven, and to the Son of God, when they flew to the land of Egypt, before the wrath of the wicked king; it is said that they even refused them a draught of the sweet waters of the great river, when the blessed two were athirst. O! you will say that it was a heavy crime; and truly so it was, and heavily has the Lord punished the Egyptians. He has sent us a wandering, poor as you see, with scarcely a blanket to cover us. O! blessed lady, (accursed be thy dead as many as thou mayest have), we have no money to purchase us bread; we have only our wisdom with which to support ourselves and our poor hungry babes; when God took away their silks from the Egyptians, and their gold from the Egyptians, he left them their wisdom as a resource that they might not starve. O! who can read the stars like the Egyptians? and who can read the lines of the palm like the Egyptians? The poor woman read in the stars that there was a rich ventura for all of this goodly house, so she followed the bidding of the stars and came to declare it. O! blessed lady, (I defile thy dead corse), your husband is at Granada, fighting with king Ferdinand against the wild Corahai! (May an evil ball smite him and split his head)! Within three months he shall return with twenty captain Moors, round the neck of each a chain of gold. (God grant that when he enter the house a beam may fall upon him and crush him)! And within nine months after his return, God shall bless you with a fair Chabo, the pledge for which you have sighed so long! (Accursed be the salt placed in its mouth in the church when it is baptized)! Your palm, blessed lady, your palm, and the palms of all I see here, that I may tell you all the rich ventura which is hanging on this good house; (May evil lightning fall upon it and consume it)! but first let me sing you a song of Egypt, that the spirit of the Chowahance may descend more plenteously upon the poor woman."

Her demeanor now instantly undergoes a change. Hitherto she has been pouring forth a lying and wild harangue, without much flurry or agitation of manner. Her speech, it is true, has been rapid, but her voice has never been raised to a very high key; but she now stamps on the ground, and placing her hands on her hips, she moves quickly to right and left, advancing and retreating in a sidelong direction. Her glances become more fierce and fiery, and her coarse hair stands erect on her head, stiff as the prickles of the hedgehog; and now she commences clapping her hands, and uttering words of an unknown tongue, to a strange and uncouth tune. The tawny bantling seems inspired with the same fiend, and, foaming at the mouth, utters wild sounds in imitation of its dam. Still more rapid become the sidelong movements of the Gitána. Movements! She springs, she bounds, and at every bound she is a yard above the ground. She no longer bears the child in her bosom; she plucks it from thence, and fiercely brandishes it aloft, till at last, with a yell, she tosses it high into the air, like a ball, and then, with neck and head thrown back, receives it, as it falls, on her hands and breast, extracting a cry from the terrified beholders. Is it possible she can be singing? Yes, in the wildest style of her people; and here is a snatch of the song, in the language of Roma, which she occasionally screams.

On the top of a mountain I stand,
With a crown of red gold in my hand,—
Wild Moors come trooping o'er the lea,
O how from their fury shall I flee, flee, flee?
O how from their fury shall I flee?

Such was the Gitána in the days of Ferdinand and Isabella, and much the same is she now in the days of Isabel and Christina.

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Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers of the Colony of Plymouth, from 1602 to 1625,—now first collected, and illustrated with notes. BY ALEXANDER YOUNG. 8vo. Boston: Little & Brown.

THE execution of this handsome and elegantly printed volume redeems the promise of its title. It is a complete collection of the contemporary accounts of the emigration and settlement of that venerable body, distinguished by the respectful affection of their descendants as the pilgrim fathers, revised and arranged in chronological order. Fortunately for our infant history, the first settlers of New England were men who both acted and wrote history—acknowledging as they did the continual guidance of a particular providence, no step was of slight importance—no action trivial—their trials or triumphs were to them alike worthy of record—for doctrine—for reproof—for example,—and to the prevalence of this feeling we owe the privilege at this day of “hearing them speak in their own tongue the wonderful works of God.” The book commences with Governor Bradford’s long-lost history of the people and colony of Plymouth, now first re-

covered and identified by the industry of the editor. This is followed by "Bradford and Winslow's Journal," "Winslow's good news from New England," and four other tracts of equal interest, the volume closing with a collection of letters by Robinson and other elder worthies of the pilgrims at Leyden and Plymouth. The editor has judiciously allowed the ancient documents to tell their own story, throwing his researches into the form of notes on the main narrative. They are copious and satisfactory, showing a thorough acquaintance with the sources of American history. We receive this book with pleasure as another evidence that the time of indifference to the deeds of our forefathers has passed away, that the reproach of apathy to their fame is no longer deserved. It has been said, and with truth, that the age most likely to abound in glorious examples for the imitation of posterity, is that wherein the memories of the past are most carefully cherished. Mr. Young has secured a place amongst those who have deserved well for their labors in this honorable field.

C. W.

Lectures on Spiritual Christianity. BY ISAAC TAYLOR, author of "Physical Theory of another life," &c. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 200 Broadway. 1841.

THIS volume, though aimed in opposition to certain doctrines advanced of late by certain leading divines of the Church of England, is surely the offspring of a quiet and gentle spirit. And yet there is a clear, manly and independent tone in the spoken and candid mode of argumentation, and the far stretching glance into moral ends, and unwearied searches amidst theological theories. One can form a picture of the life of such a man as the author, from the book; its practical tone, and earnest simplicity of manner would tell us, that he was a good and gentle father, with frequent changes from books to the family circle of instruction, guidance and protection; full of all kind sympathies, such as home teaches; judging not often, and then not harshly; and carrying even into the world of debate, the same desire as he would to reason with an erring child, and convict of error, not to glory over defeat, but to make manifest the truth. We could imagine him comfortably on his glebe; enjoying the competence of life, not its pampering superfluities, well read and instructed in each branch of learning, though perhaps neither a Newton or a Porson. In disposition, divided between the discursive rambling of the bookworm, and the strong meditation of the ever thoughtful

philosopher. Rationally pious, but with the goodness that rests not on passionate zeal, how quietly steal along the days of such a man, between active duties, meditations and studies ; the world, his family and his maker present before him, and calmly aiming to fulfil towards each, the true Christian character? It is no little honor that the enlightened theologian deserves ; for from our spiritual relations, from religious feeling, springs, as from an inexhaustible fountain, motives of love to our fellow men, and acts that shall be as flowers, and fruit and perfume in the world of man.

Christianity, as the title page says, is spiritual ; it is the words and doctrines of spirit, discerned by the soul, acknowledged by reason, and is the light of conscience. Thus considered, Christianity proves with itself freedom and immortality, and vindicates from an army of doubts and fears, the condition and the safety of humanity. Vast are the concerns, glorious the new world and its furniture, that this religion discloses. Yet all is rational ; spirituality is not mysticism seeing ghosts, and zeal mistaking ends, frantic and aimless. Calmly and intelligibly does the author teach and endeavor to free from bondage of error ; and sow the fruitful seed of good doctrine, like a faithful husbandman. His very style, so full of Christian courtesy, and the sentences soft as a kind voice falls on the ear, shows how far from the mind of the author is rude polemic jar, and contentious personal blame. In it, we see the reason of the rhetorician's rule of art. With humble and patient attention, his deductions ought to be followed ; whilst he shows the universal character of our religion ; its destiny infinite in diffusibility ; unlimited in its application to the work of destroying all of evil upon the earth ; and capable in each individual of changing the soul's essence to purity and love. The will, the source of human activity, that drives imagination and the intellect to do its pleasure, and takes counsel of reason as with the chancellor of a realm, seems that which is most individualized, most spiritual in man ; hence Christianity addresses itself to this inmost faculty, and that good will should be in man, working outside to all mankind, is its aim. In its operation upon the heart, purifying and elevating its motives, refining, with a new law of universal application and flexibility, the instincts of reason and the judgments of conscience, it shows how superior it is to all the inventions of restless man, the blind fervors of mysticism, the cunning devices of imposture. Looking forward then from these characteristics, it is easy to argue that this doctrine is the hope of the world ; that universal love and peace alone, through the operation of this upon the hearts of individuals, can embrace the wide nations in a new league, as universal as that of

the ocean-waters covering its vast bed. There can be no doubt the day dawning indicates the future noon, and the true golden age returns again; a better garden than that of old is planted, and the souls of men are the living trees; again the voice of God walking is heard, and speaks strongly to the conscience of all in this divine and spiritual revelation, the life of Christ. Deep in the soul these realities must penetrate; no rites, no forms nor ceremonies but are its mere husk. Love, and Christian love, is every thing. The changing ideas of men may modify the ceremonies of the church, yet whenever the harmonious doctrines of this religion have had their influence on the heart, there will decorum and decency, the vestment of honor, the outward respect of bended knee and clasped hands, remain—symbols of thanks to the worker of the greatest of miracles, man's redemption. With the author all men agree, that charity and faith are the weighty matters of this our Christian law. They will teach us to bow in the communion, and fellowship in good feeling, with our brethren, whatever may be their mode of worship; reserving to ourselves the freedom of choosing the most precious gold, the finest linen to adorn our own sanctuary. Nay, we could seek the great retirement of nature, the woods or the sea-shore, read an earnest kind discourse of our author on the quiet morning of the first of the week, and then make one short prayer to the Father in Heaven and go away justified, as if the soul by faith had heard the solemn absolution, the pledge of an earnest repentance and a true confessional.

A

The Works of William E. Channing, D. D. First complete American edition, with an introduction. 5 vols, small 8vo. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1841.

THE consideration we have recently given to the writings of Dr. Channing, permits us at present merely to announce to the reader the publication of his complete works. It is the contemporary of two different editions recently published in England; in a notice of one of which the British Critic lately undertook to say the reputation of Channing was on the decrease, a courageous assertion in the face of facts, showing that an ecclesiastical review can sometimes lay aside conscience for the convenience of its argument.

The present edition is admirably executed in the best Boston style, and has the advantage of extraordinary cheapness. The whole works of Channing may here be bought for five dollars.

This is as it should be : the popular works of an author always recommending improvement, are here an improvement themselves on the usual style of publication, and may carry to the house of the poor man an idea of literary taste and elegance, while they are strictly within his means.

The edition is accompanied by a new preface, in which the author sums up his labors and topics of discussion. There is an extended allusion to his theological views, of which he says he intends to write a fuller and maturer account than he has yet given. The remarks on practical matters of morality are able and eloquent, and show no sign of weariness in a good cause. We extract a passage on War.

Must fresh blood flow forever, to keep clean the escutcheon of a nation's glory? For one, I look on war with a horror which no words can express. I have long wanted patience to read of battles. Were the world of my mind, no man would fight for glory; for the name of a commander, who has no other claim to respect, seldom passes my lips, and the want of sympathy drives him from my mind. The thought of man, God's immortal child, butchered by his brother; the thought of sea and land stained with human blood by human hands; of women and children buried under the ruins of besieged cities; of the resources of empires and the mighty powers of nature, all turned, by man's malignity, into engines of torture and destruction; this thought gives to earth the semblance of hell. I shudder as among demons. I cannot now, as I once did, talk lightly, thoughtlessly, of fighting with this or that nation. That nation is no longer an abstraction to me. It is no longer a vague mass. It spreads out before me into individuals, in a thousand interesting forms and relations. It consists of husbands and wives, parents and children, who love one another as I love my own home. It consists of affectionate women and sweet children. It consists of Christians, united with me to the common Saviour, and in whose spirit I reverence the likeness of his divine virtue. It consists of a vast multitude of laborers, at the plough and in the workshop, whose toils I sympathize with, whose burden I should rejoice to lighten, and for whose elevation I have pleaded. It consists of men of science, taste, genius, whose writings have beguiled my solitary hours, and given life to my intellect and best affections. Here is the nation I am called to fight with—into whose families I must send mourning—whose fall or humiliation I must seek through blood. I cannot do it without a clear commission from God. I love this nation. Its men and women are my brothers and sisters. I could not, without unutterable pain, thrust a sword into their hearts. If, indeed, my country were invaded by hostile armies, threatening without disguise its rights, liberties and dearest interests, I should strive to repel them, just as I should repel a criminal, who should enter my house to slay what I hold most dear, and what is intrusted to my care. But I cannot confound with such a case the common instances of war. In general, war is the work of ambitious men, whose principles have gained no strength from the experience of public life, whose policy is colored if not swayed by personal views or party interests, who do not seek peace with a single heart, who, to secure doubtful rights, perplex the foreign relations of the state, spread jealousies at home and abroad, enlist popular passions on the side of strife, commit themselves too far for retreat, and are then forced to leave to the arbitration of the sword, what an impartial umpire could easily have arranged. The question of peace and war, is too often settled for a country by men, in whom a Christian, a lover of his race, can put little or no trust; and at the bidding of such men, is he to steep his hands in human blood?

P

Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia Petræa; a journal of travels in the year 1838. By E. ROBINSON and E. SMITH. Drawn up from the original diaries, by EDWARD ROBINSON, D. D. 3 vols., 8vo. Boston: Crocker & Brewster.

Dr. Robinson brings to the performance of his task advantages which have never before centred in one individual. In the former imperfect state of intercourse between Asia and Europe, the traveler who, for a love of gain, or in a restless spirit of adventure, hastily traversed the sacred scenes of Holy Writ—steering a dangerous course among the perils incident to a stranger amidst a hostile and semi-barbarous population—was the only source of information for the student, whose hours were consumed in a vain attempt to reconcile the discrepancies of inaccurate observers with consistency and truth. It has been reserved for the present day to unite the two characters, and, through the increased facility of communication, render a tour to the Holy Land a safe and attainable object. Of this altered state of circumstances, Dr. Robinson has been the first to avail himself. Distinguished in both hemispheres, as a philological scholar of the greatest eminence, his whole literary life has been passed in studies that formed a fit preparation for this journey, which, in the words of the author, “had been the object of his ardent wishes, and had entered into all his plans of life, for more than fifteen years.” He was also fortunate in securing the companionship of the Rev. E. Smith, whose intimate knowledge of the Arabic language, derived from a long residence in Palestine, proved of great use in furthering the objects of the journey.

The plan of the tour made by Dr. Robinson and his Reverend coadjutor, was sufficiently extensive to embrace the most interesting points of observation in the Holy Land and the adjacent countries. His narrative begins with Greece and Athens, where a fortnight’s stay sufficed to afford a hasty view of the transition state through which that country is now passing. From thence he crossed the Mediterranean to Alexandria, and after a short time devoted to the ancient glories of Egypt, (while the hollowness and mockery of its much-vaunted modern civilization were at every step too apparent), was joined at Cairo by Mr. Smith—and from this point the actual commencement of the expedition may be dated. We can but briefly indicate the route pursued. Mount Sinai and “the secret top of Horeb” were the first objects of their search—these were reached by the usual way, through Suez and the desert. After a careful investigation of the disputed sites in this region, they proceeded to Akatah, at the head of the Red Sea, and from thence through the desert to Jerusalem. Their

residence at this central point was prolonged some time; the antiquities of the Holy City demanded and received a thorough examination, and various excursions were made to the Dead Sea and other adjacent parts of the country—the most important being an expedition to the mysterious Petra, through Gaza and Hebron, which was safely and expeditiously performed. On finally leaving Jerusalem, their course was directed through Nazareth, and by Mount Tabor, the lake of Tiberias, Tyre and Sidon, to Beyrut. Here the illness of Dr. Robinson prevented the farther prosecution of their travels, as originally intended, to Damascus and Lebanon, and our tourists took leave of the Holy Land from Beyrut, precisely one month before it was laid in ashes by a bombardment by the combined English and Austrian fleets, in September, 1840.

In the three bulky volumes now before us, the public are presented with the results of this journey. It is to be regretted that the size of the work will necessarily limit its circulation within narrow bounds. We think this is in a great measure owing to the injudicious use made of the materials collected by our travelers. For the sake of enabling the reader "to follow the process of inquiry and conviction in the traveler's own mind," Dr. Robinson has thought it best to arrange his book in the shape of a most accurate and painfully minute daily itinerary, (so thickly sprinkled with bearings and distances that many of the pages resemble a land-surveyor's field-book), interrupted continually by disquisitions on historical and geographical subjects: these are always instructive and often the most interesting parts of the book, but their frequent occurrence quite destroys the homogeneity of the work—it is neither a book of travels or a treatise on biblical geography, but a hybrid compound of the two. We have never met with such difficult reading as the itinerary portion of the narrative: all the usual comparisons fail us in characterising it—the sands of the desert are not drier—the waters of the Dead Sea are not so heavy. The historical illustrations are laboriously compiled from a great variety of sources, forming a valuable digest of information from ancient and modern writers, especially valuable to future travelers in assisting them to penetrate the dark cloud of tradition that has for centuries disguised the truth and localities of history in the Holy Land.

This work, however, is too important to be neglected for the minor defects of composition or arrangement. Most of our American readers are familiar with much of the ground traversed, through the lively volumes of Mr. Stephens. The differences of the two travelers are amusing subjects of comparison. Gifted by nature with close powers of comparison and a considerable degree of native shrewdness, and these sharpened by a thorough